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V Poetry (Irish)

3

To,

The Rev

Nicholas Walsh

with the high esteem

& kind regards

of the author.

11 Cootehall Park

Kingstown

1873

(Gannon)

THE O'DONOGHUE OF THE LAKES,

AND OTHER POEMS.

Opinions of the Press.

"The scene of the chief poem in this volume is laid in the loveliest of all regions—Killarney—and in the most poetical of periods—the feudal age. The subject is the betrothment of Eva, the daughter of O'Donoghue, to the Water King. Eva is a beautiful creation, in exquisite harmony with the lovely natural world around her. The descriptions are rich in poetic colouring. One scene in particular, where the Water King comes with his court of nymphs and sylphs to claim his betrothed, is a gorgeous picture, in which fancy and reality are finely blended. The other poems are excellent. 'The Court of Apollo' is remarkable for higher qualities than mere sensuous beauty, and some of the smaller pieces breathe a truly noble and patriotic spirit."—*Morning Herald.*

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"Few who have ever visited the world-famous Killarney but will be glad to meet, in the happy descriptions and 'thick coming fancies' of this poem, their old recollections so delightfully revived."—*Cork Examiner.*

MARY DESMOND,

AND OTHER POEMS.

MARY DESMOND,

And other Poems.

BY

NICHOLAS J. GANNON,

AUTHOR OF

'THE O'DONOGHUE OF THE LAKES, AND OTHER POEMS,' ETC. ETC.

LONDON:

SAMUEL TINSLEY, 10, SOUTHAMPTON ST., STRAND,

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1872.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
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Dedication.

To thee who ever with a summer smile
Wove in my dreams etherial, golden rays:
Aye held a mirror in thy hopeful hand,
In which a shadowed garden was revealed,
Bright with the lustrous colouring which glows
Upon the brow immortal of the soul—
To thee, who only lacked Dædalian power
To plume world beating wings of shining might,
On which I might soar up to Fame's high cliffs—
Thou whose fond heart was as a well profound,
Filled with rich, beaded drops of burning love:
To thy sweet memory I devote these lays.
These pages now in spirit do I place
Above that priceless casket in the brain
Which holds with giant clasp all thoughts of thee.
Take thou this wreath of song as one entwined
To bloom, if so it may, around thy name,
And shed its odour on thy spotless worth;
Thou ever shrined within my bosom's love—
My wife on earth! my angel aid in Heaven!

Hodges 29 Dec. 1921

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MARY DESMOND.

A MYSTIC wild, on Erin's wave-lashed shores,
Where, like a mail-clad host, tall, circling crags
Hid in the murky skies their helmet tops,
And iron tempests ruled the cloudy years.
Within this girding prison, like the spoil
Which swords have won and warriors keenly guard,
A gently curving upland shone with smiles.
Anear a grove of tall and shady elms,
A straw-roofed hamlet hung above a stream,
Whose wintry fierceness made November pale,
Whose summer softness won the kiss of June.
Here, like those dainty blooms that spring to life
Beneath the shelter of o'erhanging ferns,
And dower the joyous air with rare perfume,

A village maiden, tall, of slender frame,
From childhood's years to ripened womanhood,
In sweetness, grace, and lustrous beauty grew.
The purple triumphs of the looms of Tyre
Gleamed through the ebon splendor of her hair,
Whose bending tresses kissed a brow of snow,
As darkness meets the light at matin's prime.
Great locks of glory crowned a dome-like head,
Curled down rich cheeks of flashing, tide-like change,
Where streamed a red sea on a marble shore.
Or strayed by lids of sable-tinted hue,
Beneath whose slanting fringe the violet's bloom
Slept in the darkling shadows of her eye.
Which shone at times with such a vivid light,
As though her pupils were the sparkling warps,
And Sol's celestial beams the golden woof.
As pearly dew that gladdens drooping flowers,
So was the soul of Mary formed by God,
To lift the sinking heart in sorrow's hour,
Or plume the wing of mirth on festive day;
Her voice and manner gentle as a Saint,
"Bird of the Village" was she called for love.

And thus the tenants of this hamlet fair,
Through every circling change from year to year,
Basked in the magic of the maiden's smiles,
And lived a life of dream-like happiness.

Among the dwellers on those hill-girt slopes,
One youth was verging towards his manhood's prime;
Graceful in build, with limbs of sinewy mould.
His clear blue eye, his lip of love or scorn,
Knitted by Nature to a noble face,—
Such face as Phidias chiselled for his Gods—
Shadowed like picture of the limner Sun's,—
His soul of princely worth and righteous aims.
To him the radiant beauty of the maid
Was like those angel shapes that sailors see,
Floating at evening through pink southern skies;
Which light up Wonder's chambers in their souls,
Then steep their senses in a blissful trance.
And oft when twilight curtained out the day,
And home from busy fields the youths returned,
Mary would stray with Dermot to the banks,
Where bending willows fringed the curving stream;

And there, beneath their ever favoring shade,
The vows of love were syllabled in joy.
Then would the glad blood gambol in their veins,
The bright cheek glowing with a crimson smile,
As runs a zephyr through a summer mead,
When clover blooms are reddening all the lea.
So were the blessed spring-times wont to pass,
And summer's pride give way to Ceres' reign;
So autumn o'er this feast of hearts moved on,
Till all her dazzling hues rained down to earth,
And made for beauty dead a glowing pyre.
And when that winter 'gan to chill the air,
And sorrowing woods hung out white plumes of snow,
Above the bier where virgin blooms were laid,
Fast by the cosy hearth at ebb of day,
They charmed away the dreary, lengthening hours
In jest and song; or gazing through the brands,
Into the flame where fancied love was limned.

Then came a change, for such was God's decree;
A noisome cloud hung thickly o'er the land,
And from that cloud a curse leaped down to earth,

And blasted Nature's seedlings in their prime.
The people's food was poisoned far and wide,
And large-limbed men, with shoulders Atlas-like,
And sinews potent as the forest king's,
Stalked, gaunt and spectral-like, through cheerless fields,
Where Spring's rich verdure lay a seething mass
Of bleak destruction in the Autumn's sun.
Death, clothed in ten-fold terrors, filled the air:
The dearest, sweetest links that bind our hearts—
Those bright ethereal webs of love's own loom,
That joined in high communion soul to soul—
Were rent in twain by that rude mower's scythe.
And all the nameless joys that hung like gems
Around the treasured shrine of sacred home,
As bright-winged birds that hear the blue hawk's scream,
Dropped, one by one, in fading sheen away,
And left its empty portals cold and lone.
Nor was the happy vale where Mary lived
Untouched by that dread plague which swayed the land.

Along each ruddy cheek and lustrous eye,
Its yellow ensign—Famine—slowly raised;
Till lusty youth and blooming maidenhood,
Swathed in its cankerous folds, drooped, gasped, and
died!
And Dermot, faded now in hue, and shorn
Of that huge strength which clothed his manly form,
Seemed like some ash that, near a river's marge,
Springs proudly first o'er tangled brake and briar,
The awe and envy of each neighbouring shoot;
Till lurid ruin, stooping from the storm,
Strikes it with fiery foot, and mars its pride.
So changed from what he was did Dermot come,
And wanly gaze in Mary's pitying face:
Shrivelled and wasted were those muscles now,
Which, strong as steel-bound chains on warrior's mail,
Could lift a goodly bullock from the ground,
Or hold at bay the herd's fierce lord himself.
The hearty life-blood seemed to run no more
Through the dry channels of that spectral cheek.
"Would'st know me now, dear Mary?"—faint his
voice—

"Thy Dermot of two little moons ago?
Those few short weeks of Famine's busy reign
Have rudely dimmed the brightness of my life,
And changed to bitter sorrow all its joy.
Another month beneath such mourning skies,
And e'en this life itself shall cease for aye.
Mary! as sinks the summer sun to rest,
He lays a golden plank across the wave,
Which leads from death to Western realms of hope.
My life! the holy priest of God shall bless
Our marriage vows ere Autumn browns the year.
Then hand to hand we 'll seek a brighter shore,
For ocean shall not make a jail for love!"

And Mary, thus—"Dermot, you know my heart!
It has been thine for many a circling year,
And shall be yours till death shall still its beat.
I 'd fly with thee to earth's untrodden bounds,
Or lead a life beneath the burning East.
But my poor father, Dermot, he is old,
And worn out now by want and suffering keen;
I must be near to cheer his last few years,

And soothe those cold, sad hours that creep towards death.
Go then, my Dermot, since it must be so,
Fly from this tainted land to happy shores;
But when, ere many summers roll their flight,
The star of hope shall beam above our isle,
Return, to find your Mary still the same,
Unchanged as is the shamrock of our glens."

In accents low and sad, then Dermot spoke—
"Since fate will have it, Mary, it must be.
The gold I go to win shall be thy dower,
Aye, frame a crown of joy for thee and me,
Beneath the shadow of whose glittering round,
Like summer day, our lives shall blithely pass.
For seven long years must thou my absence bear.
But what of that? thou art but still a child!
Howbeit, upon the seventh revolving year,
Through weal or woe, I shall return to thee,
For nought but death shall free me from this vow.
A week from hence our vessel leaves the port;

Sweetest, thou wilt be there to say, Good-bye,
And breathe a prayer for Dermot, as he sails."

Then Mary promised, and when dawned the morn
That Dermot's ship should court the ocean's gales,
Mary was seated by the busy wharf,
Her heart weighed down with woe that choked her speech.
And as the youth in deep, but voiceless grief,
Pressed the dear cheek in one long kiss of love,
Then rushed on board, where sails were fast unfurled,
The life seemed fading out of Mary's face.
And when the ship swept bravely down the stream,
And reared its stem against the greeting wave,
The eager eye of Mary followed it.
And still the wistful glance from that dark orb
Cast clear its light to where her treasure stood,
Till growing space hid Dermot from her sight;
Then raising hands unto her streaming face,
Her hollowed palms became a cell of flesh,
In which her bitter grief a captive lay.

Meanwhile the bark that carried Dermot sped
Its white-winged way through azure-shadowed seas;
Passed in its snowy flight, rare, shining isles,
Where glowing citrons hung their golden fruits
Like Dragon-watched Hesperides—or waved
Their pearly blossoms, till the dusky woods
Shone like the stars on God's broad shield, the heavens.
So on till land is reached, and Dermot threads
A giant city's bright, stupendous ways;
Then changed its Babel din for boundless plains
And forests tall, where immemorial pines,
Towering to heaven despite the bandit storms,
Lift their unconquered tops to crowning clouds.
Or skims o'er noble streams so brightly broad,
So grandly mirroring the tropic beams,
They seem the radiant highways of the sun,
Pointing the gleaming tracks to undreamt Edens.
And now the self-made exile dwelt in wilds,
Where stately mangoes lift their tufted crowns,
And lustrous passion-flowers shed their rays
Among bananas; or the varied sheen

Of gorgeous star-apple, bay, green, or gold,
Like fairy's sceptre flashes on the sight.
Here, too, did Dermot till the fecund earth,
And reap the golden produce of his toil,
Through each successive year till riches came.
And then he raised a mansion on a slope,
Where there was no need of garden ; for the flowers
Gemmed all the space around in wild parterres,
And twined their shining tendrils in the front,
A living wall of blooms that glowed like love.
And haughty planters of the teeming South,
Who held rich lands, like kingdoms in their breadth,
In jewelled grandeur to the mansion came,
And placed their daughters' hands, and dowers vast,
At Dermot's will—so much they prized his worth.

But not for him such luring baits as these.
The dark-eyed beauties of the tropic South,
And all the lustrous softness of their bloom,
Were vainly glassed within his listless eye,
Whose heart was far away in native wilds,
Along the margin of that cherished stream,

Where he and Mary spent the summer hours,
And tuned their love-songs to its soothing flow.
Then Dermot musing often of those days,
And ever treasuring his sacred vow,
Still pondered, till it flashed upon his soul
The time had come he should recross the wave.
"I have a home for Mary here," he said—
"If still the poor old land be steeped in woe.
'Tis true the glories of this southern sun
Which gleam on bud and leaf, on stream and flower,
Are curtained from my gaze by thoughts more kin.
But let my Mary wander in their midst,
And dower the landscape with her magic smile,
Eden's fair garden shone not like it then!"
So, when the spring had burst the frozen chains
The ice king cast upon the crystal rills,
Adown a Southern river Dermot sailed,
And sought his isle that glittered in the West.
For days with gentle breeze the good ship sped,
Or paused in calms on which she seemed to sleep—
But when the middle ocean marked her flight,
The *storm* king issued from his granite cave,

And lashed the waters into iron strife.
Dividing waves disclosed the glistening sands,
Where the pink sea-shell sparkled in their midst,
Like beauty sleeping on a battle plain;
Now rose in crested legions on their front,
Careering down upon the hapless craft,
As white-plumed warriors on their chafing steeds.
And so for days, like one on fever's couch,
Tossing in pain as poison rules the blood,
Reeled the stout vessel in the fitful gale.
While the brave seamen, lashed along the deck,
Use skill in vain to check the tempest's power,
Until at length the force of Nature spent,
One morning ushered in a heavenly calm.
Then followed favoring winds and peaceful seas,
Till dusky flights of lightning-winged birds
Herald the welcome land that lies in gloom.
Now faintly looming through the misty space,
The bold blue ridges of his native hills
Unroll their massive fronts to Dermot's eye.
Then weird, gigantic outlines sharper grow,
And all their sun-gilt pinnacles are seen;

While as through stiller depths the vessel glides,
The well-beloved emerald clothes the slopes,
And spreads its glistening mantle to the tide.
Sails the sad sea-bird o'er the dizzy crags,
Pipes the shrill red-shank on the sandy shore,
As when the boyish Dermot climbed those cliffs,
In all the daring hardihood of youth,
Or plunged him bravely from the beetling rock,
And cleaved with sinewy arm the giant wave.

And when that Dermot leaves the good ship's side,
And treads again the old historic soil,
A burning longing thrilled along his veins
To seek the modest cottage in the glen,
Where Mary lived anear the winding stream.
Then bracing all his sinews for the march,
While wildly throbbed the pulses of his heart,
The glad returned wanderer breasts the hills
That rose around the valley that he loved.
But when at length the topmost height was gained,
And Dermot gazed upon the vale below,
The hill-fed stream still winded on its way,

The leafy trees still waved them in the gale ;
There stood the hamlet's walls, but roofless, lone,
Save only here and there a little gleam
Of yellow thatch, which seemed to make more drear
The grass-grown gables of each ruined home.
A sickly pallor whitens all his cheek,
And faintness sheds a dampness on his brow ;
His senses swim—his faltering muscles yield—
And stunned with grief, he almost sinks to earth.
At length restored, he treads the downward path,
And seeks in quickened strides the vale below :
Crosses the streamlet by the well-known steps,
And gains the hamlet on the wings of speed.
At once he hastens to the crumbling walls
Of Mary's cottage, where in happier days
Clustered the roses, where the woodbine climbed,
And made sweet nests of blossoms on the eaves.
Then looks all vainly through the portals cold,
Or gropes around like one who walks in sleep,
Beating with aimless feet the chilly floor.
With burning brain he issues forth again,
And seeks a little orchard close at hand,

Where he and Mary strayed in autumn time,
And gathered nuts while they were making love.
No Mary there, as on those blessed eves,
Embalmed in memory's holiest cells for aye.
No Mary there! no friendly face is seen
Of all the erewhile tenants of the vale—
No hoary patriarch who told them tales
Of ghost and fairy o'er the winter fire—
Not one of all the playmates of his youth,
No loved companion of his manhood's prime.
His eye was moist, the strong heart throbbed within—
"The old are dead," he said, "'tis Nature's law,
And Famine's scythe has thinned the striplings' ranks;
Yet some survive that weapon's deadly sweep—
His features grim ne'er froze my love's dark eye."
See, as he speaks, amid the apple wood,
Whose leafy skirts droop greenly to the stream,
A shepherd boy swung down from bough to bough,
And leaped at length upon the sloping sward,
A rustic Mercury at Dermot's feet.
Then, as he gaped up at the stranger's face,
Spoke Dermot—"Tell me, lad, what curse has fallen

On yonder ruined hamlet that we see?
Hath Famine blasted all its sons of toil?"
And then the urchin, with a puzzled air,—
"What, sir, the most had died that awful year,
The time they call the Famine; for the rest,
They had no money when the rent-day came,
And then the agent brought the *sojers* here,
And all the cottagers, both young and old,
The white-haired man and woman, sick and hale,
Even the mothers, with their little ones,
Were cast out on a cold, cold winter's day;
And when next morning came, the corpses pale
Of fifteen villagers were counted o'er,
Stretched stiff behind a bank, where they had crept
To save them from the bitter wind that comes
Down yonder valley in November nights."
"O! heavens, lad, stay, stay, a little—Mary!—
Mary Desmond! 'Bird of the Village'—lives?"
"O! Mary Desmond, sir! she is not dead,
But dying, dying fast! 'The Village Bird'
Was hunted with her father that same day.
The poor old man soon died; then Mary went

To live with her good aunt, on yonder hill.
For seven long years did Mary Desmond dwell
Within that cottage, lonely in herself.
Still, and all, she 'd smile betimes. When the sun
Plays hide and seek at evening, I oft saw
'The Village Bird' hop lightly down the glen,
And seat herself upon a willow bank
That rises up above the mountain brook,
And stay there till the fairy candles burned
Within the white-thorn rath, like 'Will-o-wisps.'
But when the eighth year came, I heard them say
She took to grieving for her lover true,
That died in foreign parts, God rest his soul!
And now she 's dying too, sweet 'Village Bird!'"
"How many years, boy, since the Famine time?'"
"'Tis nine years coming harvest-tide, good sir!"
"O! cursed search for gold! that made nine years
Appear but seven! Wretch! O, wretch! O, wretch!"
Then suddenly—"Her cottage! Show it me!
My feet shall bear me to its envied walls,
Though every league that rolled itself between
Spread into globes as spacious as the earth!"

"On yonder hill," the lad replied with fear,
For Dermot's tones had chilled his circling blood,—
"On yonder hill—behold it peeping there!"
Then the wild questioner forbore to speak,
But straightway climbed with speed the orchard's slope,
And bent his hurried footsteps through the glen,
To gain the cottage on the distant hill.
Again he passed the hamlet's grass-grown walls,
And happy memories rained upon his soul
Like fragrant dews upon a ruined tower.
But as a warrior in the charge of death,
Beats back with sinewy stroke the myriad points
Whose hedge of steel obstructs his fiery path;
So Dermot, one fixed goal before his eye,
Drove from his brain all thoughts that bid him pause.
Breathless he toiled along the steep ascent,
To gain the base of that fair, verdant hill;
Then pressed with feverish tread its swelling ridge,
And trod at length upon its wavy crown.
Nor rested aught, though labour urged repose,

And every vein upon his swollen brow
Stood out like ropes along a vessel's mast;
But striding on to where the cottage lay,
Beneath the shadow of thick whitethorn boughs,
Threaded the winding lane where wild flowers bloomed,
And stood at length before the cottage door—
Here paused a moment, for his heart beat fast
With sore fatigue and unspoke agony;
Then, calling up his courage, stood within.
The aged aunt of Mary knew him not,
So burned by Southern suns his swarthy cheek.
But when he breathed his name, she took his hand,
And raised it to her lips, then, kissing it,
Burst into sobs; and while her cheek streamed o'er
With scalding tears, a wrinkled finger raised,
And pointed to the room where Mary lay.
Then Dermot, sadly shaken, raised the latch,
And entered the sick room all breathlessly.
But Mary, though his ruddy cheek had changed
To tawny hue, and care had marred his brow,
And though disease had made her senses dim,

And left her sparkling eye all lustreless,
Knew well the sweetheart of her youthful dream.
And when the first surprise had passed away,
She rose with love's own courage from the couch,
And wound round Dermot's neck her folding arms;
And then made bold to speak, though many sighs
And sudden chokings, and her heart's quick throbs,
Hindered awhile the coming words: "Dermot,
Since the last sun of seven years went down
From that sad morn we parted at the wharf,
I never hoped to see thy face on earth;
And now your fond smile warms my heart awhile,
And for a moment dries the damps of death,
That hovered fog-like o'er my chilly brow.
Dermot! you scarce were gone from home three months,
When down upon us came the landlord's man—
The agent—asked the rent, and all replied,
'The crops had failed,' and begged another year,
When brighter summer would increase our store.
Then, with a cruel frown upon his brow,
This human fiend addressed his soldier horde,

And bade them drive us from our childhood's home.
And, seeing me, he came a little near,
Then beckoned me aside, and whispered low,
He loved me. If I 'd love him, too, as well,
My father's home should stand, and I should live,
Like high-born lady, in a mansion proud,
With silks to wear, and servants at my call.
Dermot! if thou had never won my heart,
Still would I spurn him as I did that day—
The mean, false knave, the villain that he was.
Seeing my scorn, he bade his soldiers strike
My helpless parent, whom they backward thrust;
And bruised his flesh so with their clenchèd fists,
That in a week hence he was in his grave.
Dermot! you guess the rest. I breathed in hope
For seven long years: but when the eighth began,
I thought that death had freed thee from thy vow,
And all my hopes of bliss were gone for ever!"
Here Mary Desmond, overwearied, paused;
And Dermot, while his lips were ashy pale,
And all his frame convulsed, in broken words
Told of the fatal error he had made,

When looking for the gold that was to shape
A crown of joy for Mary's brow and his.
Then, while a flash of hope lit up his eye,
Thus said :—"'Bird of the Village!' see me here,
Come back to wed the woman I have won!
Then fling the weight of sorrow from thy breast,
And dry the damps of illness on thy brow,
For thou must live to be a smiling bride,
To sway the pulses of thy Dermot's heart,
And shine the idol of his Southern home!"
But Mary answered feebly and by starts,
For fast her life was ebbing :—"Dermot, sweet!
Oh! never, never, day shall dawn again
For your poor Mary on this earth below.
Never again, my Dermot, when the spring
Shall hang green tassels on the stately larch,
And shed her dainty spices in the air,
Shall Mary, hand in hand with thee, stroll down
The flowery lane that winds unto the brook.
No summer flowers twined into a wreath
Shall deck my brow upon gay bridal morn;
But near my grave to be, the dear blue-bell,

The early primrose, and the daisy fair,
Spring up like innocence; the morning gale
Shall blow their precious odours o'er my head
When I am sleeping in the churchyard yon.
But thou must wed, my Dermot, some true girl,
To share your Southern home"—here Mary gasped,
Her breath was coming heavily and slow;—
"And when your babes shall gleam like buds of joy,
And hold your knee, and lisp their father's name,
And look into your face with artless glance,
O! Dermot! then recall the blissful time,
The days when we were children, you and I!
Then think of how we wandered in the glen
On summer eves, while thrilled our hearts with glee.
Think of the hours we sat beside the brook,
And heard the wild doves cooing in the elms;
O! think of all our smiles, and all our joys,
The sweet delicious moments of our love!"
But Dermot answered in a sad, sad voice,
"Never a mortal woman shall I wed;
For here on earth, or in the land of God,
ever still shall claim thee as my bride!"

Then over Mary's fixed and glazing eyes
A lustre shone that lit her pallid cheek;
She upwards rose, and stretching forth her arms,
Would fain have clasped her Dermot to her heart;
But, falling backwards in the effort, sank
Upon the pillow, sweetly smiled, and died.

As the white flag the soldier sees on high,
When shot and shell have done their deadly work,
And all the city's martial hopes are o'er;
So, as he gazed upon the marble brow
Of her he loved, dull now in rigid death,
The cheek of Dermot livid pallor showed,
And vanished was the crimson of his lips.
He did not weep, he did not wildly rave,
He only pressed his forehead with his palm,
Then looked a moment on the silent dead,
With such a gaze as doth a sentenced man
Look on the morn that shall behold him die.
For Mary was the music of his life,
And when she ceased to live, the chords of joy
Within his giant heart were snapped for ever!

Clasping with tender hand the raven locks
That lay upon the snowy counterpane;
He cut away one curl, for life to be
The treasured relic of his Mary gone;
Then, kneeling down beside the couch of death,
He raised his eyes to God in holy prayer.

They buried Mary in the churchyard near—
Wet were the cheeks of the poor mourners there.
Few though they were, their grief was deep as love.
And as the turf was pressed upon the grave,
Dermot had vanished from the gloomy scene.
But when the crimson fruit of the wild ash,
The Herald of the Autumn, graced the crags,
One chilly eve a forlorn wanderer came,
Threaded the lonely alleys of the dead,
And reached the stone that bore his Mary's name;
Then leant his heated frame upon the slab,
Kissed the dear words thereon with lips all fire,
Grasped at a neighbouring bough with outstretched
hand,
And sobbed, while withered leaves fell fast around.

His broken heart was in that grave beneath,
His love on Memory's wing was floating far
Down the sweet valley of the bygone years,
Hovering at times o'er flowery scenes of youth,
Or bowers that echoed with a maiden's voice;
Poising itself again, with pinions fixed,
And motionless as death, on some dear spot,
Where Joy's full chalice had o'erflowed the brim,
And strewed the sparkling bead-drops of its foam,
Till all the humble sward around was changed
Into a gleaming diamond-mine of love.
So doth the lark, ascending azure space,
As some fair deed on earth soars up to heaven,
Rest in mid-air to view the blessed sight,
Whose glory checks the rising of its wing,
And swells the song of rapture on its tongue.
These wanderings o'er, came back the dread to-day,
The autumn gloaming, and the wind-swept grave,
The lone, chill sound of slowly-falling leaves,
And murky hue of sable-shadowed clouds.
A traveller, falling from the crater's edge
Into the womb of icy avalanche,

Might pass through such a change as Dermot here.
The swift, warm blood seemed curdling at his heart,
Which with a painful spasm was convulsed—
For tyrant grief his conquering banner raised
Within the busy citadel of life,
And for a moment had its victor been.
The mourner reeled, recovered, reeled again,
And, falling on the grave, swooned fast away.

Night in its spectral robes had floated off,
And amber morn glittered on the hills,
As chanced a rustic, on his labour bent,
To pass that way with implements of toil.
Who started as he gazed on Dermot there;
For still his frame was stretched upon the grave,
Yet not in stillness now as when he swooned,
But with a restless movement of the limbs,
And breathing stertorous, like one who saw
Some dread, appalling vision in his dreams.
And as he still stepped onwards, he beheld
The sleeper's brow all fevered,—marked betimes,
As the cold matin breeze swept crackling leaves

Athwart his brow, that he would shout, and beat
The air all vainly with his clenchèd hand;
And once he spoke, reviling "Satan's sons,
Sent by their sire to steal his love away."
The pitying swain felt tears upon his cheek,
Then straightway moving to where Dermot lay,
He woke the sleeper with a gentle word;
And, folding arms around his heaving chest,
Upraised him slowly from the maiden's grave.
Then linking arm in arm, with measured pace,
He led the half-unconscious sufferer on
To the small cottage where his people lived;
And, stepping softly, o'er the threshold's beam
Stretched the sick man upon an humble couch.
There day by day, and week by week, he writhed
In the hot torture of a fever's rage.
No heavenly sleep weighed down those wearied lids,
No balmy moisture cooled that burning brow;
But by the sickly glaring of his eye
'Twas clear to see, as by a shaded lamp,
The fire that revelled in his seething brain.
Then came at length the dread awaited hour,

When the skilled gladiators, Death and Life,
Within a human temple measured swords.
Close was the contest, keen and fiercely waged—
Now Death, now Life, was turning victory's scale.
At length the seal of sleep was burst in twain,
And round the opening lids Life's streamer waved.
Yet slow and wearisome the road to health,
The autumn's rainbow glories all had gone,
And hostile winter bared his icy sword,
Ere Dermot rose from out his troubled couch;
Months passed before his wasted limbs were firm;
And when at length he sauntered in the air,
The bright-eyed spring from out her kindly lap
Was scattering emeralds broadcast in the mead.
E'en then his steps were weakly, and at times,
As large drops beaded all his pallid brow,
He'd lay him down upon some sunny bank,
Where peeping violets made a shore of blue
Along the margin of a wimpling brook.
And while the air was fragrant with the balm
Of wood-flowers springing in the copses round,
And all the forest warblers piped for joy,

Like sweet-tongued children waking from their
sleep,—
The scalding tears ran down from Dermot's eyes;
For grief's wild winter raved within his breast,
And rained its well of waters on his cheek.
Once as he wandered on the breezy slopes,
While morn on dewy pinions climbed the east,
A saintly priest in sable garb came by.
The gathered snows of age were on his head,
Yet all a summer's glory in his smile.
Who, seeing Dermot mournful, he addressed
In words of holy pity, for he owned
A soul of spotless whiteness, clear as light,
A heart of tender impulse, true as heaven.
"Dear son, while all around, beneath, above,
Revels in the warm spring-time; why has grief
Imaged its marble pallor on thy cheek?"
Then when he learned the sad unvarnished tale,
The kindly tear bedewed his furrowed face,
And all his bosom heaved; but in his brain
Were blessed thoughts of peace for wounded hearts,
And from his lips mild, soothing accents came.

The wingèd essence of the Word revealed,
The Man of Sorrow pictured to the life,
With all the shadowed radiance of His love,
Fell on the mourner's calmed but saddened soul,
In draughts of consolation sweet as when
The wings of silence brood upon the night,
While tempests slumber in the cradling air.
Then Dermot, though his grief was rooted still,
Deep as the viewless depths of some huge mine,
Heaved not so often from his wearied breast,
Oft checked the hot drop springing to the lid;
For in his soul there was a lulling calm,
That bathed it in a soft tranquillity.
So when the fragrant days of Spring had gone,
And Summer, gorgeous as an Eastern bird,
Sailed o'er the bosom of the leafy woods;
Dermot rejourneyed to the well-known port,
Waited the moment when a vessel sailed,
Then crossed the deep with softly speeding winds,
And up a spreading river reached the woods
That guard the splendors of his Southern home.
There years on circling years did Dermot dwell,

Toiling through summer's heat and winter's chill,
Yet wandering ever in the evening hour,
Pensive and slow, amid the bright parterres,
Resting meanwhile among the starry blooms,
Like Sorrow seated at a wedding-feast.
And so mid light and gloom as decades spun,
And poured their rolling silver on his head,
The stream of grief that gushed for Mary, gone,
Became commingled with a sacred sea,
Whose springtides rose to God from out his heart;
And all the barbèd pangs that fired his breast,
The bitter memory, haunting aye his brain,
Were mingled with the surging of the waves.
And so his love for Mary, day by day,
Was sweetly merging in that larger love
Which, with a thrilling vastness, filled his soul.
Refining all within, and sifting close
From out the dross of earth wide overlaid,
The essence pure, the shining ore of heaven.

'Twas on an eve in early autumn time,
When flashed the forest like a northern light,

And all the earth was in a lustrous trance,
That Dermot feebly wandered mid the flowers,
Then laid him down upon a grassy mound.
The fire that erewhile lit that eye was gone,
The glow that mantled in that cheek had fled.
He drew a raven tress from out his breast,
Kissed it with rapture that illumed his brow,
E'en for an instant, with the beam of youth.
Gazed on the southern river as it streamed
To seek the sea that bathed his own sweet isle;
Then raised his eyes to heaven, and shed a tear—
A tear which sorrow's travail in his heart
Had wrung all shining from his dying lid.
The crimson sun shed down a slanting ray,
Which played in splendor on that gem-bright drop;
The soul of Dermot glided forth in hope,
And up a rainbow ladder climbed to God.

COLUMBA:

THE DOVE OF THE CELL.

A PEARL of worth within a sapphire urn,
Lough Gartan ripples in the northern breeze,
And sheds a freshness, with its sister Veagh,
O'er all the sylvan grandeur of the land,
Where giant Dooish, pillowed in the clouds,
Bound in the silken chains enchantment weaves,
Sleeps through the ages rolling soundless by.
While lone Glendowen, like a warder tall,
Unrolls its vastness in the distance dim,
And stretches forth its brawny, purple arm,
To guard the gentle Lady at his feet.
When Pagan mists were melting in the light
Of Christ's fair truths, within the realms of Erinn,

Great Patrick journeying to these storied plains,
Where the long line of Niall ruled, to bless
The warlike clans that gloried in their sway,
His chariot's gleaming axle snapped in twain,
All in the ford of Daol; welded again,
The pieces severed; thirdly, joined with care,
They parted in the tide to meet no more.
And Patrick, speaking to his people, said—
"Cease ye to wonder! for the land that lies
Beyond this stream, outstretching to the north,
Needs not my care, nor yet my benison;
For here shall child be born, whom men shall call
'The Dove of Churches'—he shall bless that land;
In this behold why stays my chariot here!"
Full fifty decades from that mystic time,
When God's broad glory dowered Bethlehem's crib,
A matron walked among those emerald fields,
Which stud the sainted valleys in the north—
And as the frolic breezes came with speed,
And played among the bendings of her hair,

A music thunder pealed among the hills,
And tongueless lightnings gleamed along the sky.
And then an angel down a sunbeam slid,
And held a veil before the matron's eyes,
In which the blooms of Paradise lay wreathed,
On beds whose colours were the hues that glow
Within the mirror of clear, diamond streams,
That lave the odorous meads in God's own land.
Anon the veil rose upwards in the gale,
And like a rocket in the evening air,
Spread wide, and wider as it swept along,
O'er wood and plain, o'er mountain and o'er lake.
Till all the blooms and tints expanding shone,
As shines a burning temple when the wind
Unfolds its flaming beauty on the night.
The Angel thus—"Daughter of earth! a Son
Shall yet be born of thee, to flower in heaven;
To live a prophet in the shrines of God,
And usher thousands to ethereal bliss.
And as yon starry blooms still deepening fly,
With broadening splendor as the distance grows,

So shall the ripeness of his virtues glow
With fresh effulgence in each bound of time:
Till ere his crown in heaven be fully wove,
A peerless glory shall surround his brow,
Which Death's tremendous shadow cannot dim!"

That Son at length became a breathing life,
And fed on virtue's fruits waxed strong and good.
Till all the inner chambers of his soul
Shone like fresh flowers on an altar's height,
When pinioned prayer is winging up to God.
And as he reached to manhood's crowning years,
The grace and splendor of his princely form
Were talked of as a wonder in the land.
For though Columba was of royal race,
Sprung from the valiant Niall's ancient line,
No scion of that house had ever worn
Such wealth of feature and such noble charm.

In lilied lustre of his early prime
An angel came to young Columba's side,
And prayed the youth that he would then unfold

In human speech the virtues he loved best;
Who straightway answered his high visitant,
"Chastity and wisdom." Three maidens fair
Then came before Columba, clasping arms
Around his neck, who, spurning them with rage,
They all at once exclaimed—"Oh! know ye not
From whence we come? Our father sent us here
To be thy brides, and love thee passing well!"
"What father have ye?" "God! Our names on earth,
Prophecy, Wisdom, and Virginity!
We come to dwell with thee for evermore!"
Now when his years to fitting ripeness came,
Columba placed a cowl about his brow,
And went forth raising high monastic towers,
Homes for the scholar and the priest alike;
For in the soul of young Columba glowed
The burning love of poetry and art;
And much he yearned to ope where'er he might
A deep-sunk shaft to learning's golden mine.
Nor were his days of manhood e'en unmarked
By Heaven-wrought wonders, prodigies sublime.

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At vast Clonard, where mitred abbot swayed,
A Christian bard, Gemmäin—the young monk's love
Who won, so prized he poet's skill divine—
Was reading to his pupil in the air,
When in the distance they a maid beheld,
Who towards them from a ruthless robber ran,
Seeking at Gemmäin's hands the power to save,
Vouchsafed to patriot bards through green-clad
Erinn.
Bounding along like deer whom hound pursues,
The terror-laden child strove hard to hide
Beneath the flowing garments of the bard.
But heedless of her shrieks, the assassin fleshed
His lance within her neck, nor breathed she more.
Then thus Gemmäin, while horror froze his heart:
"How long shall God's avenging arm lie still
Before this crime be punished?" Then to him
Columba spoke—"Within this hour shall death
O'ertake the assassin of this harmless maid!"
And while he spoke the murderer fell and died.
The fame of which foreshadowing went forth
Over the hills and through the bowery glens,

Till praise of young Columba every mouth
Declared in all the hamlets of the land.

Once did the wondrous youth in wanderings come
To Finnian's Abbey—Finnian the Wise—
Who in his earlier life had been the guide
That piloted his thoughts up mazy steps
Of knowledge, and through fecund fields of mind.
Beholding in the Church a Psalter rare,
Unmarked by Finnian, he transcribed each page,
And bore away the fruits of grateful toil.
But Finnian sore indignant at the act,
Claimed back the pages that Columba writ.
The Bard straightway declining, both were pleased
To bide the ruling of their sceptered Lord;
And seeking Tara's royal court, they craved
An audience of King Diarmid, Ireland's king.
Then Diarmid, listening gravely to the tale,
Though kinsman to the bard, a judgment spoke,
Unbiassed, clear, yet in a proverb rude.
"To every cow its calf—to every book
Its copy"—thus did royal Diarmid rule.

But wrathful was the Bard at such decree—
And later, when a prince of kingly blood
Had ta'en a life, unconscious of the deed,
And guiltless suffered yet a murderer's doom
Under the king's sign manual—passion swayed
The mind of young Columba—Celtic fire,
The fierce hot flame that through the centuries rolled,
Like to a burning springtide in the veins
Of all who owned the blood of an O'Niall,
Surged in their young descendant's stormy breast,
And beat against the barriers of his frame
In flashing, wild, imperious wave on wave.
Then moving northwards to his sea-bound home,
Where the vast, martial prowess of his race
Rang like a thrilling Pæan through the land,
Columba raised from its undimmed repose
The furled sunburst of broad-edgèd flame
In which the nestling glories of his sires
Lay, fed by catering memory through the years,
And gave its storied splendors to the breeze
That stirs the broad oaks in Tyrconnell's plains.

Then from the isle-graced Erne's wooded shores,
From Innishowen's vales and Tillon's brow,
O'er Innisboffin's slopes, from lone Gweedore,
From Bannagh's pinnacles and tall Slieve League,
Hy Niall's kindred, myriad as the flights
Of birds whose wafting pinions bear with speed
The fair-haired summer to our northern shores,
Came gleaming in their coats of twisted mail,
Which shone like seas at rise of evening star.
And as, when in her sepulchre of leaves,
Strown with a thousand wreaths of scentless blooms,
The golden-bosomed Autumn glows no more,
But winds, whose fierce-winged pinions beat the air,
Like sound of iron rain come thundering down,
And bear her fragile monument away—
First gathering the spoil through all the copse,
Then hurling leafy columns rank on rank
O'er the chill mere in weird magnificence;
So first converge those bristling, high-souled bands,
Then sweep like dreaded thunder stone from high
Far southwards to the land where Diarmid ruled.
And in their warlike midst Columba rode,

And sped a vivid courage through their frames;
As when in summer solstice boys disport
In Ocean's freshness—revel in its balm,
And drink its grateful magic through each pore.
Thus in its splendor marched this kingly host,
Till gleamed in emerald sheen the plains of Meath,
Then Diarmid's gilded tents were seen afar,
And huge battalions, whose uplifted spears
Shone like a glacier. These Columba marked,
And prayed for speedy victory 'gainst the king.
Now Diarmid bid his bowmen to the front,
And flights of arrows like an eclipse, dark,
Fell fast among Hy Niall's legions. They
Withstood the shock, as doth the sweeping wave
The impetuous gale that tilts at it from shore,—
And quickly forming into squadrons bright,
The Northern spearmen on their chargers huge,
Columba hurled them on the imperial foe.
A whirlwind of living flesh and blood,
They brightly burst on Diarmid's awe-struck ranks,
Hew their way through—then swiftly wheeling back,
Cut out a crimson egress—bending low—

A third time charging on the broken files,
They fall like eagles swooping upon kids,
Scattering each driblet broadcast, as the breeze
Disparts the neigh of steeds at early morn.

And so the fight was o'er, and Diarmid fled.
Hy Niall's warlike sons with joy welled high,
As doth the beads in cups of sparkling wine.
But with the victory came a fell remorse,
And seated like a nightmare in his breast,
Crushed with its cruel weight Columba's heart,
For thinking of the graves that had been made,
And all through him whose mission should be peace.
And while in nameless anguish thus he mused,
A message came from Tailtea's royal court,
Wherein a synod sat upon his crime,
Summoning the bardic monk, who straightway rose,
And went before the synod like a king.
"The blood that crimsoned all Cool Drewny's plain
Cries out against Columba,"—such the charge,
Which to the proof transformed, the sentence ran,
"For every Christian slain, a pagan soul

To Christ's high laws Columba's tongue must win."
Then, with a heart in mighty sorrow steeped,
The Bard went wandering in solitudes
Where echo, sleeping since the birth of earth,
Ne'er woke the sombre landscape into life.
Whilom he sought some abbey's sacred shade,
And craved of holy men their counsel wise,
Yet scant relief obtained. Thus rolled the months;
But succour came at length. A saintly monk—
Molaise—applied a balsam to the wound.
Yet such a balm; no noxious drug that runs
With deadly speed within the azure veins,
More loathsome in his sight than to his heart
This balm,—"In full atonement for his sins,
And that Columba's soul true peace should know,
A bark must waft him from his native shores,
Nor shall he glance again on Innisfail."
The magic of no mystic sorceress
Hath ever worked a spell more black with woe;
Not Odin's gloomy ministers e'er wove
A sadder fate upon their sable warp.
Yet did Columba curb the giant grief

That bowed his spirit, as a man doth bend
A sapling, stretching far across his path;
Then to his warlike kinsmen, ruling high
O'er broad Tyrconnell, uttered first his fate.
Next to his saintly brethren of the cowl;
Of those, twelve ardent monks with courage bright,
And love of pure Columba, made resolve
To share the exile of their princely chief.
With them the young Mochanna foremost shone,
The son of Ulster's king, who held to scorn
The claims of kindred, or of native soil,
As weighed with all he owed a friend in grief.
Who, when they launched a curroch on the tide,
Unfurled the sail, and cleaved the leaping wave;
But as the loved shore lessened in his view,
Thus spoke Columba to the land of Erinn:—

"O! stream-born Erinn, rising o'er the sea,
Land of the lonely rath and shadowy glen,
Land of the rivers brightly broad and free,
Land of the virgins fair, the high-souled men,
My love, my love, my Innisfail!

Farewell for ever to thy arching woods,
That clasp fair Summer in their leafy arms;
Farewell for ever to the sheen that floods
In emerald streams thy wonder-weaving charms,
My love, my love, my Innisfail!

Farewell for ever to thy mountain steeps,
With eagles bathing in the sun-streaked gleam;
Farewell for ever to the gale that sweeps
Thy flower-clad valleys in the morning's beam,
My love, my love, my Innisfail!

May Freedom's angel, hovering ever nigh,
Preserve thee chainless as the world-seeing air;
May Genius waft thy children's thoughts on high,
And snow-white Virtue grace thy daughters rare,
My love, my love, my Innisfail!

Farewell once more! thy shores are fading now,
They only glimmer in the distance blue,
A crown of sorrow sits upon my brow,
As thus I cast my last sad glance on you,
My love, my love, my Innisfail!

'Tis o'er! thou vanished neath that envied wave,
Whose happy water soon shall bathe thy strand,
The world opens now—a giant grave!
Farewell! farewell! my God enamoured land!
My love, my love, my Innisfail!"

Then veering northwards in a prosperous breeze,
They reach the rocky skirts of Scotia's shore,
And coasting slowly by the broad-mouthed Clyde,
Circle far-reaching Kintyre's sea-wreathed head.
Skim the lone shores of Rathlin's crescent cliffs,
And sail through wooded Islay's dreaded sound.
Then gliding onwards thread the beauteous isles
That gem Lough Craignish's breast—till Mull appears,
And purple Morven in a dream of clouds.
Yet soon the snake-like channels sink from view,
Floats the light curroch in the bounding tide
Of old Atlantic, where dank sea-birds' wings
Gleam in the westering sunbeams, like the necks
Of festive mermaids circled with sea gems.
So o'er its liquid path the dwarfish ship

Moves bravely, until towering o'er the tide,
The peerless Fingall's cave in Staffa shines
Like some stupendous shrine dropped down from
Heaven.
Still farther on looms Oronsay's dark isle,
The exiles furl their sails, and leap on shore.
But up a lofty mound Columba strained,
And seeing in the distance dim, the mist
That hung o'er stream-born Erinn, kept his vow,
And sought again his curroch's osier deck.

On waters towards the north a sparkling isle,
Springs o'er the waves as softly as a dream
Glides through the wreathings of an infant's brain;
Which like some truant from an antlered herd,
Its kindred isles outlies, and shines alone.
Columba wistfully surveyed these shores,
And swiftly wheeling thither turned his prow.
Soon as the beetling cliffs in outline gleamed,
A mimic bay burst mirror-like to view;
Hemmed redly round by grim, fantastic crags,
Against whose granite base the breakers leaped,

Breeding a silver thunder in the air.
Here the monk mariners their vessel moored;
Next strode Columba on the virgin beach
Of fair Iona—such the isle was called—
Clomb up the highest hill, nor seeing there
The shadow of his land, voiced the rude gale,
And hailed Iona as his hermitage!

Then as the cloudy passions creep away,
When dove-like meekness hovers in their ken,
So did the scathing rage that erewhile burned
Within Columba's heart, like mirage fleet.
And he who bore the "Sunburst" in the fight,
Till victory came, and eased him of its grasp,
Within the same right hand upheld the cross,
And with a fire-edged tongue laid bare its truths,
Until their crimson memory shone through tears.
And when the sacred lustre glowed afar,
Like star to Magi, Europe's guided eyes,
Drank in the light whose pinioned beams arose,
And crossed the odorous stream that flows near
God.

And as to him who sleeping in a cave,
Wakes ere the earth is turnèd to the sun,
And sees before his eye no shape save gloom—
But presently he looks, and far away,
Down the dim windings of his flinty cell,
One tiny ray of light is stealing on—
And now another gleams—and then a third;
And ere the wheel of time hath marked an hour,
The cave is all aglow with lustrous beams,
Which dart in slantwise from the rising orb,
And flood the concave till the mica shines
Inlaid on parent granite, like a host
Of fairy stars upon a saffron sky.
So did Columba's fame, like distant ray,
First roll before the listless heathen's gaze.
Then nearer shine, until with broadening stream
Of clear, resistless glory, it flamed out,
And flashed the Gospel on the grateful North.
Then rang each hamlet throughout Albyn wide,
With praise of all things fair, and true in Christ.
Then rose the airy domes of Learning's fanes,
Like flower-enwoven avenues to heaven—

Then glowed among the misty Hebrides,
That planet-blaze of sanctity and lore,
Which tipped the summits of grey Scotia's crags
With light that leaped around the kindred climes.

West of the isthmus between Clyde and Forth,
Ruled the Dalradians, Connal was their king—
Lorn's sixth noble, whose sceptre's shadow fell
E'en o'er the limits of Iona's isle.
Befel it so that when King Connal waged
Relentless war against the savage Picts,
Whose robber banner floated in the North,
He sought the Niall's aid in Antrim wide.
Who forthwith lent their potent arms and swords
To scourge the Reivers. This Columba knew—
But further still his elder sire had wed
The daughter fair of Lorn's primal lord.
Thus favoured in his kinsman's, Connal's eyes,
Columba to the mainland soon repaired—
And Connal welcomed him, and gave as gift
To hold Iona ever under sway.
From such a rock-bound citadel went forth

The Abbot, and his dauntless sailor monks,
To plant the crimson banner of the faith
O'er the wide leagues of Scotland's western slopes.
No seas could terrify their steel-strong hearts,
No dark-winged tempests could their souls appal.
Not e'en the thunder of the hollow cliffs,
When night re-echoes Corryvreckan's howl.
Nor was his stream-born Erinn once forgot
In all those valiant campaigns for the Cross,
In all those perils by the sea and land,
Which Niall's sacred scion waged or dared.
When many a lustre o'er the exile's head
Had gathered like pale lichens round a crag,
Columba one day said unto a monk,
"Go, seat thee by the sea-shore in the West.
There, from the north of Erinn, thou wilt see
Arriving towards thee a poor, wandering stork,
Beaten by winds, and wearied with her flight.
Pity her! feed her! guard her for three days;
With pinions plumed, she then will turn and fly
Back to her own sweet island in the West!
I pray thee care her, watch her for my sake,—

She cometh from the land where I was born!"
And so it happened as Columba said.
But when the third day dawned, refreshed and strong,
The stork arose, and, with a cry of joy,
Flew bravely towards the cliffs of Ireland.

Thus in a golden atmosphere, where faith
Blended its triumphs with the wealth of mind,
Time spun adown its way, until a cloud
Hung round the Erinn of Columba's dreams.
The Bards who flung their Pæans to the sun,
Or wove their magic o'er enchanted streams—
Who nursed young Freedom in its eagle home,
Culled brightest roses for the bowers of Love,
Or shaped the circlet for the arm of Peace,
King Hugh would silence—hush for aye those harps,
Whose music floated to the echoing stars—
Whose numbers soft as blessings on the soul,
Dowered with a joy divine, enamoured gales.
The whilom Bard of Erinn—Poet Monk—
Who loved his lofty brethren of the lyre

With that proud love which poets only feel,
Was like the night's full moon, o'erlaid and murk.
Though sacred book had long replaced the harp
Within Columba's thoughts, he could not brook
From even royal hand such burning wrong
To music, art, and song—to Innisfail.
Fain would he launch again his vessel slight,
Seek the bold headlands of his well-loved isle—
In wingèd words of thunder give to scorn
The king whose savage mind would seal the lips,
And still the bounding chords of minstrels high.
Alas, his vow! it burns within his soul!
"Nor shall he glance again on Innisfail!"
Columba long in musing silence broods—
Then as some noble temple in the East,
Whose goodly front a thunderbolt hath marred—
The crimson wing of some gay, tropic bird,
Slides with a flash across its jaggèd dome,
And veils its furrowed harshness from the view—
So, o'er the exile's sorrow-wrinkled brow,
The radiant flush of hope sped glowingly,
And curtained from the view the tears of grief.

To Erinn he would go to save the bards,
But with a scarf athwart his shaded eyes.

Floated once more upon the rolling flood,
The white-winged vessel sun-kissed as it glides,
And through the windings of the Hebrides,
Moves like a ghost along the western wave.
And when at length the billow-cleaving keel
Had reached the margin of the Irish shore,
Columba, as he felt his native turf,
Springing like hope beneath his conscious tread,
Reeled with a moment's paradise of joy,
And knew from cowl to shoon the May of youth.
As when the hooded evening walks the hills,
A herd of deer from out the beetling shade
Of some wide forest troop into a dell,
Through which a hill-born streamlet sings in gold,
Caught from the burning tresses of the sun.
And first the dappled fawns in skips appear,
Then march the lusty elders—last is seen
The antlered wealth, and shining, massive form
Of king-like leader, moving like a dream

Of rare nobility, and matchless grace—
Who, when his subject deer behold, they wheel
In wild obeisance, bound from side to side,
Making an emerald pathway for their chief,
Who straightway passes down it to the stream—
So, from the ghostly shadow of his ship,
Seated aloft upon a warrior's car,
Mid bevies bright of maidens raining flowers,
And youths who plaited oak-wreaths for his brow,
Columba passed in love's enfolding air,
To where Convention sate in kingly state.
Then as he trod the spacious, marble court,
King Hugh and all the nobles gathered there,
Despite their wonder, rose as though some power
Unseen had drawn them swiftly to their feet.
The exile claiming audience deftly spoke,
Pleading the Bardic rights in words of flame,
And all the learned statesmen gazed in awe,
Yet other counsel than Columba's held.
Then as slight boughs that fall from summer trees,
Prone to the waters of a drowsy stream,
Scarce seem to glide along its languid fall;

Yet when the weeping skies rain down their grief,
And the wild torrent, like a fiery steed,
Comes chafing downwards from the mountain's heart,
First yield a little to th' awakened power,
Then in a circling whirl are borne along—
So did Columba's audience first resist
The easy fullness of his tranquil words;
But as he warmed, the marvel of his speech
On golden deluge bore away their souls,
To waft them to the sparkling shores of truth.
As ceased the echo of the final word,
A pause succeeds, like when in some grey cave
An ocean billow thundering from the main
Hath spent its fury on the flinty walls,
And drawn away its lolling tongue that searched
The fringing banks of mussels clustered there.
But when King Hugh arose, and voiced aloud,
"The Bards are free! I grant Columba's prayer!"
A shout arose which filled the mighty dome,
And rang around the pillars of the hall,
Hailing Columba—"Saviour of the Bards."

This o'er, Columba with a saddened heart,
At thought of once more leaving Innisfail,
Sought in his wingèd craft Iona's isle.
There, to the saintly closing of his life,
He grafted wisdom on the stunted age,
Robing the lustres in a shining garb
Of faith, and truth, and weird-mouthed prophecy,
Whose mystic splendor with unfaltering light
Still sheds its halo on the sands of time.
Or stirred the pulses of a giant breed,
From stream-born Erinn sprung, whose good swords since
Have smote the pagan foeman in all climes,
Whose teeming brain hath stamped upon the world
Stupendous impress—there, too, he beheld
The germs of faith shoot forth from out the husks
Of primal gloom, of dark, barbaric night;
And saw it grow into a stately tree,
With branches spreading shadows vast and far.
And when there came the whisper in his ear
That death was nigh, he bid his monks prepare
To part with their Columba, whom they loved.

And he—Virgnous—fourth Abbot of the isle—
To be—lone watching, saw at night,
Within the church, Columba enter there,
Encircled by a golden light, that played
On fretted roof, on chancel, nave, and aisle.
Then later, when Columba's hour had come,
He tottered forth, and towards him neighing ran
An old white horse—a dearly favored steed,
Who, with a human look of sorrowing tears,
Placed its fond head upon its master's neck,
In token of farewell :—Columba kissed
The mourning steed, and stroked him with his hand.
Next gained a near ascent, and blest the isle,
And all that there abode, or there should dwell—
Then hied him to the church, and sank in prayer.
Which o'er, he turned to the declining sun,
Whose crimson beams were bathing Innisfail,
And with a gentle smile upon his lip,
That gleamed upon his placid face, he died!
The monks who came to church at vesper hour,
Found all the aisles ablaze as though 't were day.

And when the foremost reached the altar steps,
His eyes were feasted with the heaven-born bloom
That lived along the holy exile's cheek,
And glowed above his forehead crescent wise—
Thus did Columba pass away from earth.

DEVORGILLA :

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

GREEN wealth of woods lay on the purple lap
Of hills that zoned a clear, resplendent lake,
Like evening clouds around some early star.
Each summer bough that graced the heathery steep,
Whene'er the west wind kissed its tinkling leaves,
Bowed to the wave beneath an emerald crown;
As hosts of warriors doff their plumèd helms,
When mid their glittering lists some princess bright
Unfolds her Paradise of azure eyes.
The lake itself, a moving mirror, glows
In the warm colouring of the wizard sun,
Till every isle upon its pearly breast
Gleams on the vision with a gold-green sheen;

And every sparkling wave, with foam-tipped mane,
Caught in the airy sphere of fancy's lens,
Shows like an Elfin palace, jewel-crowned;
As when at night, illumed with crystal lamps,
Echo its halls and dazzling colonnades
With some gay revel, till the saffron morn
Awakes the slumbering blooms upon the mead.

Above the tide, whose mimic billows ran
Like wingèd loves, to kiss its flowery feet,
Sloping arose a green enamelled hill,
Upon whose crest a tall and shadowy tower
Held mystic converse with the neighbouring clouds,
Decked in its granite robe, with mica bright;
As though the lustrous gems the sun-shower weeps
Had made a diamond mantle for its front.
Within an oaken chamber of that tower,
Whose deep, embowering window shone afar,
A queenly form stood gazing on the waves:
Comely and straight as some young mountain pine,
That in a craggy ravine rears aloft
Its verdant crown into the summer sky,

So gleamed upon the view this sylph-like shape;
The eyes which flashed beneath their shining lids,
Like streamlet blue, quick glancing to the sight,
From out their glittering arch of sun-hued flowers,
Shot radiance bright across a glowing face,
Where beauty's sweetest tints were pencilled soft,
And passion's cloudy shadows went and came.

Whilom in kingly halls of spacious Meath,
Where stretched O'Floinn's dominions to the sea
For emerald leagues around, in royal halls
The graceful Devorgilla long had moved,
The brightest flower in all the dazzling host
Of living blooms that graced a court of love.
There, at a mighty tournay, Brefni's chief
Beheld her seated, Queen of all the Jousts,
Gazed on that heaven of eyes, and, gazing, loved.
But not for him beat Devorgilla's heart;
Her thoughts were far away from knightly throng,
And plumy splendor in the bannered lists—
By Bann's fair winding banks, where Leinster's son,
Dermod the warlike, whom her sire had scorned

Because he dared to love her, pricked his steeds,
Or scoured the shaggy woods with fierce wolf-hound.
But harsh and sternly cold O'Floinn's decree;
Forth from her nest the captive bird is ta'en,
To grace a gilded cage in Brefni's groves;
And here, amid the pomp and pride of power,
The blaze of wealth, and all her courtiers' arts,
The unhappy Princess sighed for Bann's fair bowers,
Which bloom so soft above the silver wave.

Dun night on earth; the cheerful bogwood,
Piled on the peasant's hearthstone, blazes,
Scaring dread wolves, whose howls afar off
The shepherd warns; through oaken windows,
In yon proud castle's chambers gleaming,
The ruddy torch-lights shine like comets,
From cloud to cloud seem flashing swiftly.
One noble window there is shadowed
By forms in group, now gently swaying,
Anon in pensive stillness resting,
Then uttering cries, and arms upraising.
Nearer approach, and, cut out clearly,

Behold the form, so tall and massive,
Of one attired in garb of battle,
In iron clad, and pointed morion;
With gentler ray, the light, ascending,
Falls on a face which well resembles
A morn in eastern climes, when Summer
Comes with a cheek from smiling rosy.
Adown that face gold ringlets, clustering,
Show like the richly sun-dyed edging
Of peerless skies in those glad regions.
Each tapering hand, like carvèd ivory,
Within it pressed the tiny fingers
Of two sweet children, fair and radiant,
Like earth, ere time had marred its freshness;
So that the lovely parent, standing
Between those gems of human beauty,
Shone like a spot of sky, whose glory
A star on either side increases.

Mark, now, those talismans of Nature,
From out their keep by angels guarded,
A sacred instinct has brought forward,

As though to show a power heavenly,—
And win to ways of peaceful duty
A Brother swayed by stormiest passions,
E'en to the dizzy verge of madness.
As on a pine tree's bough so feathery,
In some thick copse a young hawk, glittering
With Summer's shining livery, pluming
His wings for foray 'gainst the songsters,
Doth turn his eye, in glances frequent,
To the warm nest where other fledglings
Seem by their anxious gaze entreating
He would not leave the branching covert,
Lest the keen fowler's gun might harm him—
So turned the warrior towards the lady,
And the bright buds that were beside her.
Anon he smiles at all endearings,
And laughing loud at words of warning,
His massy shield he snatches swiftly,
Then rushes wildly from the castle.

All fierce blew the gale as he stalked into night's
gloomy bosom,

Hoarse, hoarse, croaked the raven's voice, sailing
adown from the turret.
Still right onwards his course he wends, down to the
storm-racked valley,
Where the spirit of thunder, uplifted on loud, clanging
pinions,
Splits with his bellowing tones the ponderous gables
of granite;
And the red, panting tempest upheaves with his arm
destructive
The broad, branching oak, and the deep-rooted ash of
the mountain.
Lo! the torrent rain drunk, like the serpents in
eastern valleys,
Whose attack on their prey is proclaimed by a deep-
volumed rattle,
Roars loud, a fit warning to cattle asleep on its
margin,
To fly, ere he sweeps them away on his overgrown
billows.
Stands the chief 'neath the shade of an elm tree
lavish in foliage,

And thought on his brain falls thick and dark as the
rain-drops,
That patter in gloom on the trembling green leaflets
above him.
Then moves he adown to the shore where the surf-
laden ocean
Is lashing the echoing strand with its merciless
billows.
An ominous shade on his features was darkly de-
scending,
As slowly his parting lips moved, and these words
issued from them—

"The busy tide has almost reached its full:
See how it races up yon granite steep,
And snake-like roves along the sparkling beach!
Ah, what a wave is that! like mountain blue,
Capped with a winter's snow—now, now it bursts,
And all the triumphs of its strange career,
Since first it left the cradle of its strength;
Its passionate yearnings for its kindred shore,
And joyful pride at reaching thus the goal,

Like fame-decked traveller within sight of home,
Are voiced at length in that victorious sound,
In which it breaks upon the golden sand,
Like bed of lilies scattered in the gale.
And see as though to welcome back her bands,
The ocean's smiling patroness appears
Above the crest of yonder mountain ridge,
Shedding her rays as trophies to be worn
By the wild hero billows of the sea.

How solemn look those rugged sentinels,
Outposts of another army called the earth!
Their granite spears uplifted to the sky,
And gleaming coldly in the silver light.
While those who wield them, with their faces grim,
And withering frowns, seem boldly to defy
Their vaunting foe to cross their guarded lines.
Yon flock of seagulls, how they wheel and dip!
Their snowy bosoms shining on the sea,
Like foam-flakes gliding on a wintry stream.
Those screams of joy proclaim the time is nigh
When myriad fry will furnish a repast.

Another cry far up those misty hills,
Drowning the sea bird's din, as ocean's roar
Is heard above a rapid torrent's voice.
The night-hawk, swooping on his hapless prey,
Whom sleep hath left defenceless on the heath?
'Twere louder volumed! Ah, it is an eagle!
Heavens! how he sails adown the shadowy steep!
Lately has he risen from his crag-bound throne,
And glassed his form within the spreading lake,
To pique the moon, by claiming sovereignty
O'er scenes she deemed beneath her nightly sway.
And here, amid these wonders do I stand,
The realms my fathers ruled around me spread,
The deeds that sanctify their names recalled
By each wide plain, each mountain that I view.

My father sways around! ten thousand spears
Are lowered at my beck! with neighing steeds,
All sons of war, my ample stalls are filled.
My heart has never known a coward fear,
And, to the world's eye, Fortune smiles on me;
Yet still a cankerous worm at my heart

Forbids the healthy music of its beat,
And snatches joy from out my frenzied grasp.
Why paralyze, O, Fate! my moral frame?
Why shock it with thy reckless thunder's-roll,
When that its powers seemed fledged for loftier flight,
Its pinions coloured with the rays that shine
Most brilliantly in Glory's amber light?
Why scathe it with thy jaggèd lightning's glare,
And wither up th' aspirings of my soul,
By wedding to another her I loved
With all the fiery rapture such as I,
A child of passion, only could have loved?
Primeval solitudes, among ye born!
Cradled amid your heights, sky-piercing, nursed
Upon your rugged lap, and hushed to sleep
By flower-fed gales, or lulling sounds of streams,
I learned to love ye all—aye, deeply love!
And, as the swallow, with expanded wings,
Seeks, in his arrowy flight, fair Summer's breath,
So have I sought thee with a yearning heart,
And steeped my spirit in thy dreaminess.

Yet more, I vowed to prove, in coming time,
That I was worthy of my native hills;
My bosom swelling with a thrilling hope,
Like buds expanded by the rains of June,
I weaved day-dreams of conquest to be wrought,
Whose crimson glory should eclipse the land.

Hope thrice accursed! hollow, shameless mockery!
For to my hands all weapons it vouchsafed,
Filled with the fitting thoughts my eager soul,
Fired with a burning love my swelling heart,
Then left me, winged, without the power to fly.
O, mystery most dark! thou holy man,
Who dwells among those immemorial hills;
O, sacred Hermit! from thy peaks descend,
Unfold the nature of the sorceries
Whose foul ingredients some black art prepared,
To poison the clear fountain of my life,
And numb the pulse Ambition taught to beat!"

Enter HERMIT.

HERMIT. "Son! as I strolled upon my matin rounds,
I heard thee syllable my humble name;
If aught there be of counsel I can give,
Or pious aid by prayer, then deem it thine."

DERMOT. "These later, Father! yet a question first.
O'Floinn's rare daughter is my heart's fast love;
Now say why Fate hath torn her from my clasp?"

HERMIT. "My son! that Power who robes the glowing spheres
Hath willed it so that Devorgilla's hand
In wedlock Brefni's princely lord should hold;
Seek not to thwart that viewless being's aims,
Lest ruin, loosened from his hostile hand,
Should clutch and grind thee in its fearful grasp!"

DERMOT. "But Devorgilla's heart is not O'Ruarc's!
It cannot be the mystic Godhead's will

To join the hands of those whose inmost souls
Are aye untenanted by mutual love!"

HERMIT. "'Tis not for mortal minds to weigh the acts
Of bright infinitude; man's puny brain
Hath not the massive fibre for such task.
And such as rashly try are like those boys
Who rove in bowery wood when Summer's Queen
Hath spread her leafy treasures on each bough;
Who climb all rashly up each giant tree,
And when at length the topmost branch is gained,
Behold around the dancing forest plumes,
That rise in emerald millions as they gaze,
Until the boundless waving sea of green
Gives dizzy motion to the wondering sense,
And jostles reason on its star-bound throne.
Then placing palms across their dazzled eyes,
They glide in terror to their native earth,
A nameless panic rushing through their frames;
Or lose their hold in utter giddiness,
And redden the soft verdure with their blood."

DERMOT. "Thou movest me by thy words, and shakest much
The resolution of my inmost will;
For I had harboured the design to march
Ten thousand spearmen e'en to Brefni's moat,
Lay siege unto the castle of O'Ruarc,
And tear Devorgilla from his arms!"

HERMIT. "I know thou hadst, and may so still, perhaps.
Yet, Dermot, son of Murrough, list to me!
If ever dawns on earth that direful day,
When thou from Brefni's towers shalt tear by force
The Meath-born princess from her husband's arms,
The blackest curse that ever poisoned earth
Shall fall upon the land of Innisfail!"

DERMOT. "Speak on, thou fearful prophet, yet speak on!"

HERMIT. "I see it all before my spirit's gaze,—
The battle bursting 'mid your native hills,

The crimson gushing of thy country's blood.
The stranger host, from land beyond the sea,
Whose ruthless chief shall sow your isle with tears,
Till brother brother slays, and all the air
Is foul with exhalations of the dead.
Then Erin, with the gyves upon her hands,
The conqueror's cruel chains upon her limbs,
The cloud of sorrow on her beauteous brow!"

DERMOT. "O, maddening thought! Say sooth, thou sacred man,
For such a torrent of tremendous woe
Can no gigantic barrier be opposed?"

HERMIT. "Thou canst avert the fall of so much evil
By strict submission to the Godhead's will."

DERMOT. "How know that will, how learn that priceless truth?"

HERMIT. "Float thy thoughts upwards to the throne of Him
To whom thou owest the very air you breathe;
And though at first you wander rudderless,
He soon will shape them to their proper aims.
As carrier dove, when silken string is loosed,
At first from north to south, from east to west,
In giddy, devious flight, will wheel and turn,
Till suddenly, by mystic instinct taught,
She straightway darts upon her homeward way,
Nor stays the active motion of her wing,
Till the far-gleaming cot at length is gained—
So doth the soul of man who loves the true,
Veer wildly first in this false, shining world;
Till, schooled by Heaven, it speeds upon the track,
Whose goal is immortality of joy!
And as that dove pursues its constant flight,
Unconscious of the message which it bears
In lettered folds beneath its pinion's down,
Pregnant with smiles or tears for distant homes,—
So oft the human spirit, as it soars,

Without an innate whisper of the task,
Is made the carrier of a truth divine,
Whose comet-blaze is flashed upon the world!"

DERMOT. "Thy words have not the common sound of men's."

HERMIT. "See that the grains of sacred truth they bear
Fall not upon a bleak, ungenerous soil."

DERMOT. "Knighthood compels that I to Brefni march,
My speed is claimed by Devorgilla's will;
But in a forest nigh my forces hid,
Shall serve but as a foil to treachery.
Then secretly to Devorgilla's tower
Shall I on tiptoe steal at dead of night;
And when that at the signal she doth come
To the drawn lattice, I shall breathe to her
Those words inspired which thou hast erewhile voiced;

Tell her their seeds shall burgeon in my heart,
Then tearfully convey my last adieu."

HERMIT. "O! may thy acts bear witness to thy speech!
Heaven be with you, son! Farewell! farewell!"

DEVORGILLA'S *Tower at Brefni Castle.*

DERMOT *(beneath)*. "Appear thou pearl of love, outshining far
Those sparkling orbs that gem the brow of heaven.
Come, and endow the sable-hooded night
With unsurpassing lustre,—love appear!
See! there she gleams within yon window-pane,
As when a seraph on the canvas glows,
By some bright triumph of a painter's skill!"

DEVORGILLA *appears at the window of the Tower.*

DERMOT. "Thou fairest daughter of a lovely land,
Behold me here obedient to thy wish,
As Spring-tide answers to its Queen the Moon!"

DEVORGILLA. "O! faithful Dermot! thou hast
nobly come,
As well befits thy stainless, knightly name,
To rescue me from undreamt misery,
To snatch me from the grasp of dark despair!"

DERMOT. "Devorgilla, did but high Heaven
allow
This hand to press the spring that shuts thy cage,
Then thou sweet bird shouldst wing thy radiant
flight
E'en to that nest of love we both did dream
Hung mid the fairy bowers by Bann's soft wave.
But woe of woes, the arbiter of love
Hath willed that ours ne'er blossom into fruit!
A few eves since I wandered in a glen
Where dwells a prophet Hermit. Yearning much
To hear the mystic story of our lives,
I asked this Hermit's aid—he promised it—
Then to my questionings he answered grave
That Heaven had willed the daughter of O'Floinn
Should grace the halls of Brefni's princely lord."

DEVORGILLA. "False, cruel man! hold not his words as truth!
My soul can never harbour the belief
That Heaven ordained to wed me to a wretch
I loathe as deep as does a victim lodged
In dismal charnel vault, those fetid ghouls,
That glare and gibber mid its reeking damps!"

DERMOT. "What! Devorgilla, wilt thou not believe
The saintly man of God, whose frugal life,
Whose days and nights consumed in fervent prayer,
Tell trumpet-toned his knowledge of that sphere
Whose truths are bodied in the words he utters?"

DEVORGILLA. "The holiest and the wisest men have erred;
The promptings of the heart alone are true.
O, Dermot! thou who fondly swore so oft
To love, to shield me from the lightest harm,
Canst coldly gaze on Devorgilla here,
Pining away within a prison's gloom;

Her youth, and all those charms you said were hers,
Fast fading in the night of her despair;
Nor raise a hand to burst her cruel chains,
Because grave lips have muttered, 'Tis her fate,'
And thou hast hearkened to a greybeard's tale?
I once thought better of the warrior prince,
The brightest flower of all our tournaments,
Who wore so oft a tress of this same hair
Enwoven in his helmet's dancing plume,
As pranced his steed into the glittering ring,
To bear him conqueror in the coming joust."

DERMOT. "Heavens! Devorgilla! you unfix my soul,
And almost make me waver; yet the words
Of that most holy man seemed strangely true;
I fain would hold the oracle as false,
But conscience rules that I submit my will."

DEVORGILLA. "It is the timid whispering of the heart,
And not the voice of conscience, that you hear.

O, Dermot! thou, whose very presence chills
The foeman's blood, hath shame no blush for thee,
That dreadest thus a simple hermit's tongue?
Or is it that, thy lion spirit fled,
Thou hast no courage left for noble deeds?"

DERMOT. "By all the light that shines on battle's brow,
Thy thrilling words have spoken to my soul;
And, as I gaze into that lustrous page,
Which in the bright depths of thy glowing eye
Is lettered clear in Nature's characters,
I see the web of flimsy sophistries
Spun by a dreamer's fancy: all my will
Rebels against this hollow mockery of truth;
My very blood is tingling in my veins,
And all my being seems to urge me on
To rescue the fair mistress I adore,
From that dark fate to which a savage prince
Hath doomed her in her bloom of womanhood!"

DEVORGILLA. "O, Dermot! may that generous purpose live!
Thy heart was ever noble, do not curb
Its voiceless promptings. 'Dermot of the Spears,'
Whose warlike name hath rung our island round,
Add yet another laurel to thy brow,
And raise a woman from a living tomb!"

DERMOT. "My brightest, priceless pearl, 'tis all but done!
In yonder forest, where the moonbeams fall,
Ten thousand spears are glittering in their light.
Ere morning's sun hath climbed the heaven's vault,
A giant girdle of resistless power
Shall press this castle in its iron grasp.
Should Brefni's chieftain show a dauntless front,
And dare the uttermost, then Brefni's towers
Shall crumble in the dust; then Dermot's spears
In Brefni's vaunted guards shall flesh themselves:
And Devorgilla, from her prison loosed,

Shall with her radiant presence haunt again
The bowers that bloom above the Bann's soft wave."

DEVORGILLA. "O, Dermot! thou hast lifted up my soul!
May fortune smile upon thy banners proud,
And victory nestle in thy waving plume!"

Hark! the clamorous din of a warrior host as it rises
On the odorous gale that heralds the innocent morning.
With glittering corslet, spear, and spangled banner unfolded,
The bristling, steel-clad ranks of Dermot the Warlike are coming,
And press round the yawning moat of Brefni's storm-daring castle,
Like the myriad flashes of bees through a stately bower in summer.
Within, the warders call, and the shout of pikemen defiant,

The unsheathing of swords, and the lance-edged
wailing of women.
Till the sun, on his flaming pinions careering up
heaven,
Shoots down his beams on the towers so thickly be-
leaguered.
Now followed the crash, and the din, and the horror
of battle,
The scowling of wrath, and the starry achievements
of heroes.
The groans of despair, the headlong, red death of
bright valour,
Like the crimson descent of the sun 'neath a
tempest-vexed ocean.
And then to the issues of war came the close of the
conflict;
For floating aloft in their pride, o'er those towers so
gorgeous,
Shone the conquering, blood-bedewed banners of
Dermot the Warlike.
The fair Devorgilla, restored to the clasp of her
lover,

Flung her rare, moulded arms in white, faultless radiancy round him,
Like a snow-wreath of blooms on the neck of a statue colossal.
But like to the lustrous, transcendent, though dread coruscation
Of the lightning that plays in the air, ere it dives down in ruin,
Was the flash of that orb Devorgilla shed downward on Dermot,
Showing clear the deep tomb of his joys and his country's for ages.
And like to the far-straining eye of the night-watching seaman,
Who beholds through the moon's mystic light, as it plays on the ocean,
On some high, beetling reef, the gold-gleaming hair of a syren,
Whose fell beauty has lured a brave crew, and then foundered their vessel;
So shall patriot eyes, as they peer through the dark mists of ages,

Behold thee, Meath's daughter, the love and the ruin
of Dermot.
The radiant-hued curse of the land from whose eme-
rald bosom
You rose into life, and to loveliness seeming celes-
tial,
But to herald the downfall of hope and of high,
soaring freedom.

ADELE.

A ROYAL city rising o'er the Seine,
Glassing its form in cerulean flood,
With sparkling wavelets kissing its white feet.
Here, in an owl-like dwelling, bloomed a maid!
The magic gleaming of her golden hair,
That shone as summer in the clasp of morn,
Like sun in forests made a light in gloom.
Bright locks of fairy softness bound her brow,
And made a heaven of that gentle face,
Where beauty's banner kissed each dimpling cheek,
And love lay nestling in a soft, blue eye.
The flame that warmed her aged father's heart,
The spring that made his very pulses play,
This maiden proved; and moon succeeding moon,

To win the bread whereby they both might live,
She sped the shuttle through the dreary warp,
From fainting day-star e'en to those lone hours
That glide in silence towards the dusky dawns.

Befel it so, one troubled autumn eve,
Rare in those skies whose ensign is a smile,
When drops fell fast from crumbling, russet leaves,
Like tears down withered cheeks from ancient eyes,
That 'neath this murky roof-tree crept a youth,
In sorry raiment—poverty's own child—
But with a face like Venus's bright son.
He craved, he said, "a lodging each sundown
On lowliest couch, till morning streaked the east,
For this, a tithe from out his wage would pay."
"'Tis thine!" the old man said—then grasped his hand.

The glowing evenings of the harvest-tide,
Like rich-hued fishes dying in a net,
Or beauty lingering in a fitful swoon,
Faded away into their misty graves.

But when grim winter waved his funeral plume,
And trailed his mourning garments o'er the land;
When darkness 'gan to weave its chilling glooms,
And fling them broadcast on the shivering night;
Then towards the hearth, where streams of ruddy fire
From hissing logs made summer in the veins,
Cheating dull toil an hour, Adele would come,
With smile, and jest, and song, to cheer her sire.
And Louis—such his name—his labour o'er,
All shy at first, would warm him in the blaze.
But as a serpent in the torrid climes,
Glides from his cave, and mounts the charmer's knee,
To drink the dulcet rapture of the flute;
So calm assurance, slumbering in his heart,
Stole into life, and shone upon his cheek,
Lured by the music of a kindly word.

And thus by friendly nods and winning smiles,
His inmost pulses being wrought upon,
Obeying soul and feeling, framed a voice.
At first in fits and starts, in answer chief

He spoke—ere long he warmed—and trippingly
Along its human gamut ran his tongue.
Discoursed he then of rugged Brittany,
Where baby-eye beheld in mother's face—
Creasing in love, at sight of her firstborn,
One bright, dissolving shadow of its God!
Anon he talked of wolves upon the plains,
Or of the wrecks that strewed the bristling rocks,
When iron tempests thundered on the coast.

And Adele gave an ear unto these tales,
And shuddering at the perils Louis braved,
Would sigh, and cross her hands, and raise her eyes,
And softly murmur out, "But Heaven saved thee!"
This Louis marked; yet, modest, answered not,
Though deep her accents sank into his breast.
Thus passed in converse the long winter nights;
But when the air began to reel with joy,
And earth, like infant, wakened from its sleep,
Climbed with delight into sweet April's arms;
Then in the shade of spreading orchard trees,
Where apple-blossoms arched a fairy maze,

The twain would walk on dew-distilling eves.
And when that Louis saw the amorous thrush
Shake from his wing the pearly springtide drops,
And pipe a ditty to his speckled mate;
Then passion leaped into the young man's blood,
Like dew from bird fled shyness from his soul,
And love's soft language fashioned its own tale.

Flushed Adele crimson at the silvery sounds
He poured impetuous in her ravished ear;
Her pulse beat quick, her eye with pleasure flashed,
And impulse would have answered, "Take my heart!"
But as those words came fast upon her lips,
A vision of her father crossed her gaze.
Feeble and old, he seemed in fancy's glass
To pray with streaming eyes she would not wed,
Till time, like fire, should test her lover's worth.
Then she all trembling thus: "Speak not of love
Till Ceres turns the springing grain to gold,
And wains are laden with the glittering sheaves.
Then, if thou speakest, an answer thou shalt have!"

And Louis, sorely troubled, answered "Yes!"

O'er France sailed Summer on Flamingo wing,
And grapes were changing green for purple hues,
When to the city's towers a traveller came:
A dark-eyed merchant from the sun-bright south,
Glorying in his craft, and in the wealth
That buoyed him high up in the social world.
In distant Marseilles rising from the tide,
Like sea-born mother of unconquered Greek,
The fame of Gobelin looms had smote his ear.
Yearned he full deep to gauge their hidden art,
And stamp the golden cunning on his brain.
So bent, he roamed fair Paris o'er and o'er,
And hearing Adele's shuttle as he paced
Close by her window in the calm of morn,
Raised the rust-eaten latch, and entered in.
Fair were the blossoms Adele wove in thread,
And bright the rainbow textures of the woof,
But these the merchant had no eyes to see.
He only saw Adele above her loom,
Lustrous as Naiad issuing from the wave;

Gazing adown upon the pictured blooms,
Like Flora seated mid her subject flowers.
Silent for moments stood the man of wares,
Spell-bound by loveliness' entrancing sight;
Then as Adele, with half-averted face,
Sought for her threads, more freely heaved his breast.
Yet still o'erawed, he moved into the room;
And as he met the eye of Adele, paused,
Bowed low his head in gravest courtesy,
And begged to view some samples of her skill.
Deeply he praised the marvels there displayed,
And lavished gold for fabrics she had wrought.
But ever and anon his eye would glance
From flowers enwoven into Adele's face.
Changed he the theme to speak of southern skies,
Of lustrous gleams and glows that imaged heaven;
Now of his mansion by the rushing Rhone,
Stately and fair as palace of a king,
Begirt with woods for many a waving mile.
He softly said, "O radiant child of beauty,
Breathe in a whisper you will be my bride,
And instant you are Queen of all my wealth!

Brilliants from Ind shall sparkle on thy neck,
And rubies diadem thy peerless brow.
For thee rich scents shall haunt sweet acacia bowers,
Birds of resplendent plumage gem each bough;
Swift Rhone himself shall heave his azure breast,
And hand thee love gifts in his wreaths of foam."

The merchant gazed on Adele for reply:
Yet none gave she; her thoughts were far away,
E'en by a bank the Rhone's blue waters laved.
With perfumed zephyrs playing through her hair,
Hearing at times the music of the waves;
Or lulled to sleep by liquid strains of harp,
Swept by the finger of some minstrel page.
The weaver's daughter, born mid city's gloom,
Far from fresh fields, with penury as dower,
Dreamt a bright dream of country and of wealth.
In golden day-trance Louis was forgot,
And Love's winged visit in the early spring,

Like some sweet grotto in a coral isle,
Washed by the waters of green Oman's sea,

Where purple amethyst emits its blaze,
And onyx glistens with pellucid ray,—
But which, when Ocean steals away its wave,
Abounds in sea-weeds rank that hide its sheen;
So, for a moment, did fair Adele's mind,
Sparkling erewhile with love's imperial gems,
Grow dim when syren pleasure entered there.
But as green Oman, rising in his might,
Heaves his white billows on the echoing cliffs,
Till all the grotto with the tide o'erflows,
And amethyst and onyx shine once more!
So did the spring-tide of o'ermastering love
Resistless sweep into the maiden's heart;
Till flashed again the jewels of her soul!

Serenely did she say, "My thanks take thou.
Good sir, they issue from an honest breast,
Warming all kindly towards thee for thy words!
But he who wins my hand must own my heart;
And that became a youth's in this year's prime.
We shall be poor indeed in worldly wealth,
And thou a Satrap well might aim to be.

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Yet have we stores beyond what gold can buy,
And treasures vaster than the richest mines,
In deep-sunk shafts of love that vein the heart!"
With earnest eye and firm-set lip she spoke,
And so the merchant saw his hopes were vain.
One longing glance he cast upon her face,
Blest her, whate'er her lot in life might be,
And in a spasm of sorrow sighed "Adieu!"

The gold was shed upon the ripening corn,
And harvest moon was climbing emerald hill,
When Louis walked in on a crimson eve.
"Your promise, Adele!"—and her colouring cheek
Wore the pink livery of the vanished sun.
But as a rain-drop on a summer tree,
Whose leaves are ruffled by the passing gale,
Shines pearly clear though all is moved around;
So, through her blushes, sparkled Adele's eye,
And in its glisten Louis read her soul.
One look, one start — then opening wide his arms,
He clasped the radiant maiden to his breast.

And when in slow decrease the thrilling chord,
Swept by emotion's finger, waxed more low,
Adele, in dove-like accents, 'gan to tell
How she was wooed by merchant from the South,
How gold besieged the fortress of her heart,
And how its garrison unscathed prevailed.
Then added that her sire had blest their love,
And bid it blossom into wedded bloom.
But Louis, too o'erjoyed, could utter nought,
Yet pressed her hand, and looked into her face,
With all his own in gratitude aglow!

Thy spouse, Tithonus! zoned in amber beads,
On buoyant pinion mounted the blue East,
And ope'd the flaming gateways of her sire.
Yet ere the sun ascending heaven's arc,
Shot down upon the earth his level beams,
The bridal train sought Hymen's mystic shrine.
And as the lovely Adele moved along,
Her grey-haired sire tottering at her side,
The Autumn flowers gracing the hedge-rows,
Their sweetest odours shed as bridal gifts.

And when the stately church rose up to view,
The feathered guardians of its holy eaves
Came winging down to welcome the pure maid;
And fluttered in her front, e'en to the porch,
Like Seraph bridesmaids ushering the way!
Thus Louis and Adele were happy wed.

The marriage o'er, his board the old man spread
With homely fruits, and meats, and cheerful wine;
And filling his guests' goblets, bid them drink,
Health, joy, and peace to bridegroom and to bride.
"They both are poor in purse," he said, "yet rich
In love, and worth, and noble constancy!"
And all those present nodded an assent.
Then Louis bowed his thanks in modest guise,
And rising instant from the rude oak-bench,
Tore from his breast the simple peasant blouse;
And, lo! beneath appeared a Noble's garb,
Where, on a dark blue doublet, jewels shone,

Like isles of light upon an azure sea;
Shedding their rays upon a princely form,
And face like Hector's, on the day he died!
Amazement struck the palsied viewers dumb;
And Adele, sore bewildered, gazed in fear.
Then Louis, smiling, took from out his breast
A jewelled bracelet with a ducal crown,
And clasped it gently on his bride's white arm;
Who murmuring, wildly, "I to wed a Duke!"
"Aye, or an Emperor!" did Louis say.
"By two ordeals was thy brave soul tried,
And neither were thou scared by threadbare want,
Or, fish like, lured by golden-baited hook.
A light more vivid glows within thy soul
Than ever shone on gold or flashed from gem.
Undimmed by sordid dross, or clouded stain,
A vestal light, pure as the stars themselves,
And like the sun himself, unquenchable."

As ceased her lover, Adele's eye lit up
With such a gleam as did on Dian's shine,
When glanced she fondly on the sleeping swain:

Within the splendor of an unthought sheen,
Their beings quickened by the rays of love,
Revolved in peace around its golden orb;
Whose sacred fire illumed their radiant course,
And charmed them upwards in a glow of heaven.

THE

BRIDAL OF THE WATER-KING.

In earliest blush of May's ethereal prime,
The giant peaks that guard that stream-born lake,
Which 'neath Killarney's mountains bends its arms,
To clasp a sister fair on either side—
Gleamed sharp, and darkly purple in the light
That softly ushered in the golden day.
But when the white-winged sentinel that guards
The diamond portals of the glowing East,
Touched with his ivory wand the crystal bar
Screening the presence of the monarch orb,
And rolled its pearly vastness into space—
Forth from his palace in the sparkling depths
Of Torc's blue waters, rose the Water King,

Clad in his wondrous armour, bound with gems,
And casque of steel, whose plumes streamed far
behind,
Like birds of eastern beauty on the wing.
Then vaulting nimbly on his air-born steed,
That pawed meanwhile the wave with spurning
hoof,
Moved o'er the tide a radiant flame of life,
Lit at the rainbow source of beauty's fire.
At length he reined his courser's flying speed,
As Glena's wooded glories shone in view;
And here upon a bloom-clad, grassy verge,
Where love-sick waves came wooing the sweet
flowers,
The pride of Glena's chieftain, and his child,
Eva the fair, stood radiant on the bank,
In eager waiting for her princely love,
Like star that trembles on the brow of morn,
While scales the East the crimson-pinioned sun.

And now, as moved the Lake King to the shore,
Each verdure-laden bough on Glena's mount

Hung down its emerald tresses from on high,
In lowly homage to its spirit liege—
And peals of thunder echoing through the hills,
Summoned from far and near the bridal train.
Then flocked the dazzling bridesmaids, gleaming sprites,
From glittering caves, beneath the silvery flood,
With snowy robes enwoven from the foam
That crowns the gay crest of the lucid wave.
Gay, sprightly Fays, from shadowy rath or dell,
With blooming wreaths of heavenly-scented May
Bound round the sparkling crescent of their brows;
And mountain Elves, with heather berries bright,
Skipping in purple bevies o'er the tide.
Gleamed the rich jewels on the knight's broad breast,
In golden glancing of the rising sun.
When from his steed to earth he leaped with grace,
And moving softly to the lady's side,
Doffed his plumed helm, and kissed her virgin cheek.

Then in the front of heaven he made his vow,
To love—to prize—to guard her with his life.
And when the words were voiced into the air,
The vollied thunder broke the echoes round,
Until the mellow distance toned its peals
To low-breathed music, on the stillest night.
Then piped the thrush in rapture from the brake,
The fox barked loudly in the misty glen,
The bee, hive bound, a murmuring pean sang,
While from his eyrie tall the eagle stooped,
Like banner lowered from a kingly tower
At near approach of some brave, conquering knight,
And dipped his pinions thrice beneath the tide,
In salutation of his peerless Queen.

When every sound had ceased, a chariot rare,
Of matchless ivory work, enchased with pearls,
And gay with pendent wreaths of glistening shells,
Drawn by a fairy team of milk-white steeds,
Came gliding o'er the lake on star-bound wheels.
Then as it reached the margin of the shore,
The knight led Eva to its glowing side—

And 'neath a silken awning in the front,
They sat together on a flower-wove seat.
In serried order for their watery march,
The Fays, the Sprites, the Elves, again appear,
And gem the lake for many a glittering rood.
Swift rolled the chariot o'er the placid tide,
Its diamond axle beaming like the morn;
The gold-hued fishes leaped from out the lake,
To hail with dripping fins the regal pair;
And fierce-eyed Phookas, with their lightning hooves,
Emitting fiery sparks from nostrils dread,
Like comets fly around the azure path,
Guiding the bright procession on its way.
Which, as the full beams of advancing Sol,
Struck the broad waters with a garish light,
In shadowed gleamings melts from out the view,
Far mid the distant blue of Torc's soft wave—
Like roseate hopes of happy, Eden hours,
Lost on the sands of disenchanting time!

THE MEETING OF THE FAIRIES.

In a glade
'Neath the shade
Of a whitely glowing thorn;
By a silver winding rill,
The Fays of the purple hill,
The Elves of each crystal cave,
And the Sprites of the amber wave,
Came trooping one bright May morn.

Yet stars peep,
O'er the deep
The sun's rays in golden showers
Had not gleamed down from the sky,

The birds had not ope'd an eye;
But with head under folded wing,
Were dreaming of songs to sing
Through the balmy Summer hours.

The daisy slept,
The cowslip wept
Clear dew from her bell-like leaf;
While the moss-rose on its stem
Lay shrouded like hidden gem,
And the primrose in the vale
Crouched all motionless and pale,
Like a lonely maid in grief!

Glittering gay,
Each bright Fay
Was robed in the flow'ret's hues;
Round the throat a necklace, wove
From the fruit of wild-ash grove,
While encircling sparkling brow
Ample wreaths of sunbeams glow,
And a golden mist diffuse.

The blue-bell,
Or asphodel,
That gleams with an azure bloom,
For the band of Elves so fair,
Made a dazzling garment rare;
While the larch's tassels green
Graced a belt of verdant sheen,
Shining like emerald plume.

The water-sprite
Met the light
In a cloud of silver spray;
With a slender lily wand
Light poised in her tapering hand;
While the foam of wavelets flash
Round the waist in a snowy sash,
Glancing in pearl-coloured ray.

Grand and lone,
On a throne
Framed from the web of gossamers;
The Queen of all the Fairies

Darts around her wondrous eyes;
Her sceptre, moonbeam bright,
She waves in the dim twilight,
While round not a leaflet stirs.

Icicle
From river chill,
Sparkles far her graceful crown;
Woven daffodils that nod
O'er the valley's fragrant sod
Are the robes her limbs adorn;
While her gems are mica, borne
From the granite ledge adown.

Move her lips,
A fay skips
All the glittering circle round;
Fingers pressed, the fairy band
For swift dance on tiptoe stand;
While, to make a carpet gay,
Tumbles fast the hawthorn's spray
In pale snow-wreaths to the ground.

Music low
Was the flow
Of the rillet's tiny stream,
Beating time, in measure sweet,
To the fairies' flying feet;
While for lustres, hung on high,
Shone the stars that gemmed the sky,
Glancing down with trembling beam.

In a reel
Now they wheel,
Or in mazy circles whirl;
Then clear rings the silvery laugh,
While from crystal cups they quaff
The musk-flower's honeyed wine,
Or the lily's dews which shine
Like a freshly-gathered pearl.

Time's sands run,
Till the sun
Takes of earth a crimson peep;

Then the spirits' revels o'er,
To their shadowy homes they pour,
In the hill-side, wave, or glen,
Ere the eyes of wearied men
Have opened wide from downy sleep.

O'SULLIVAN'S CASCADE.

CO. KERRY.

FROM Glena's brain,
Like crystal rain,
Thy first bright drops in beaded pride,
Descend from cradling flint,
Trickling in beamy tint,
Until at length in silvery tide,
Adown the oozy edge
Of the cliff's granite ledge,
In mimic strength displayed—
The gathering waters gleam,
And form thy parent stream,
O'Sullivan's Cascade!

Slow advancing,
Whilom glancing
From out the sedge like maiden shy;
Adown the wooded hill,
In deep and broadening rill,
Thy bubbling currents onwards fly—
Now under willows dank,
Or laving mossy bank,
Then lost in darkling shade;
A soft lullaby humming,
Thy glad waters are coming,
O'Sullivan's Cascade!

Nobly spreading,
Brightness shedding,
See! how thy waves begin to shine!
As down to the valley,
With a sudden sally,
They leap o'er the stricken pine!
With their white crests glancing,
Like a chief's plume dancing,
They sweep through the emerald glade—

As the fays of thy hill-side,
Thy transparent waters glide,
O'Sullivan's Cascade!

Deeply welling,
Chafing, swelling,
Ere they rise for their snowy fall,
Thy dark pools are curling,
Their white froth hurling
Like the foam of a steed in thrall;
Then with a lion's bound,
Thy thunder sounding round,
In mountain force arrayed—
A giant May wreath it glows!
Down to the lake it flows,
O'Sullivan's Cascade!

Boldly rising,
Union prizing,
So may our sweet Isle reach to fame;
And in fair Fortune's light,
Glide to a future bright,

Winning for aye a golden name—
Until her children true
Shall blend each flaunting hue,
And Faction's wraths be laid—
Then shall she shine like thee,
Sublime, resistless, free!
O'Sullivan's Cascade!

A BRIDEGROOM'S VOW.

A BRIDEGROOM sat with his fair young bride,
By Rhine's swift current, rushing so wide,
In the crimson flush of an eventide.
O, hers was a face for a young bard's dream:
In her eye shone the light of an angel's gleam,
Her smile was as soft as the May moon's beam,
On the wild Rhine's silvered water!

A young Teuton he of peerless mould,
With a clear blue eye, and locks of gold,
And a presence manly, frank, and bold.
He whispered,—"Darling, behold our home,
Where the sun shines clearest in heaven's dome,

And the glad waves dance in robes of foam,
On the wild Rhine's sparkling water!"

That glance at the bridegroom who could guess?
'Twas one of those rare, dear looks, that bless,
As she breathed these words, with tenderness,—
"O, yes, my sweet, we shall pass bright hours,
Mid music of birds, mid scent of flowers,
Mid vines that rain their purple showers,
By the wild Rhine's murmuring water!"

But, alas! with the light of the morning star,
The blare of trumpets was heard afar,
And forth came the crimson fiend of war!
Lo! a brave red banner flouted the sky,
And a voice cried,—"Teutons, strike, or die!
For Freedom's redeeming flag must fly
By the wild Rhine's chainless water!"

Then blood of the grand Teutonic race
Sprang up in that bridegroom's noble face,
And he kissed the bride, in one fond embrace.
She weeping then,—"If thou must away,

To join in the clash of the battle fray,
Return, O, return to me, love, I pray,
By the wild Rhine's gladdened water!"

He sadly, then,—"Thou art dear to me
As to Moslem soul is the Tooba tree;
But old Father Rhineland must be free!
Yet the sweep of my sword is fierce and wide;
Victor or conquered, whate'er betide,
Again, adored, I shall come to your side,
By the wild Rhine's glorious water!"

Battle is bursting among the hills,
Horror each echo and cavern fills,
Hearts' blood is flowing like mountain rills.
Deep scarred with wounds, how the bridegroom smiled,
As he gazed on dead heaps of foemen piled,
Or fought with nerve that was nursed, when a child,
By the wild Rhine's rushing water!

The work of death on the hills was done;

In blood-red shame sank the evening sun;
But the tearful moon looked down upon
A wounded warrior, faint and pale,
Whose light locks waved in the Summer gale,
And who travelled slowly along the vale,
Towards the wild Rhine's distant water.

'Twas eve again, when, with frantic grasp,
He held his bride in a loving clasp,
And faintly cried, in a dying gasp,—
"O, treasured love, I have kept my vow!"
Then the life died out from his dew-damp brow;
That peerless bride is a widow now,
By the wild Rhine's wailing water!

But the mourning weeds she shall not wear,
And the carking grief, and the bitter care,
Shall never silver that sun-bright hair;
For her woe is felt by Pity's Lord,
In mercy he burst her life's frail chord,
And she and her lover lie dead on the sward,
By the wild Rhine's raving water!

THE

FATE OF THE THREE BROTHERS.

ONE morning in Summer, as the tears of the night
Were dried in the lingering embrace of the light,
From its valley to summit how noiselessly still
Float the wings of the air over Wardstown's green hill!

But when Sol shook the reins o'er his fiery steeds,
And, smiling with pleasure, looked down on the meads,
Then a murmur arose like the sound of the waves
When they greet the bluff Grey Man, by Antrim's dim caves.

Hark! the accents of thousands, the buzz and the hum,
As they wake from their sleep at the roll of the drum,
The loud voice of command on the gentle breeze borne,
And the neighing of chargers who call for their corn!

Aye, that green-crested hill-top is crowded again
With spears, bucklers, helmets, and war-breathing men;
Ring its echoes once more with the trumpets' alarums,
With the shouting of men, and the clanging of arms.

Now, I swear by the baldness of Cashel's grim stone,
Which frowns on the valley so sternly and lone,
Those broad crimson flags which so gorgeously gleam,
Like the blaze of the Sun on a soft Summer stream,

Wear a stranger's device! Those rough steeds were not foaled
On the plains where our forefathers triumphed of old;
And the eyes of those warriors are lit with a glow
Which shadows the frenzy and hate of the foe!

'Tis Cromwell's, that bright host! that armour-clad throng!
They are English, those voices that chaunt the war-song;
Of red-reeking slaughter they wave the fell brand,
And Horror's black plumage nods over the land!

From the shores of the Medway and Trent they have come,
In their storm-proven barks they have cleared Ocean's foam,
And by sword and by guile they have shaped out a path,
Till their standards are lifted on Wardstown's green rath.

Like the wolves in a forest, who, hunting the deer,
Sweep swiftly along without hindrance or fear,
But all in a moment stop short with affright,
When haply some lions have burst into light;

Thus Cromwell's fierce squadrons flew fast as the gale,
While before them ran mothers and children all pale—
Thus reined they their chargers, when full in their van
Three Chiefs upon snow steeds came leading a clan.

For the fame of these three gallant Chieftains in war
Had reached e'en their foes in their homesteads afar,
And their hearts' blood ran cold when, like waves of the sea,
Thundered on their white steeds o'er the echoing lea.
And fain would they turn, but no moment was given—

Down rushed that bold clan like the dread forked
levin;
As fall to the mower the rich swathes of grass,
So, smote to the ground, lie their foes as they pass.

But hark to the bugles that sound 'mid the fray!
The English are vanquished! 'tis mercy they pray—
"Hold, hold! prythee parley! no matter how
brief."
Such the message gone forth from the crest-fallen
chief.

'Tis granted! Then Cromwell—"Oh, cease, victors,
cease!
After bloodshed we yearn for the blessings of peace;
We have triumphed in turn, now let us divide—
Your share be these plains, they are fertile and wide.

"On to-morrow at sunset, ye three be my guests;
I would live in the love of such generous breasts;
Let our friendship be signed as the wine sparkles up,
And the compact be sealed in the joys of the cup."

These Chieftains were heroes, and with heroes 'tis meet
To crush not the foe when he cowers at their feet ;
Each spear is averted, resheathed is each sword,
As they swear to break bread at the Englishman's board.

The Sun, which shone down upon Wardstown's green hill,
On that soft Summer's morning so noiselessly still,
Was tipping its slopes with his heaven-wrought gold,
When the eve had set in o'er the mist-haunted wold.

But look where those soft purple shadows descending,
With the dark azure hues of the heavens are blending,
By stream and by thicket, by hawthorn shade,
Three horsemen are spurring along the deep glade.

The milk of the heifers that dot the hill-side

Would be shamed in its hue by the steeds they bestride,
And the comets that flash through our Northern skies
Lack the lustre which dwells in those three brothers' eyes.

O'er the dew-spangled meadows so lightly they sweep—
How noble they seem as they mount yon broad steep!
See their helmets flash back the Sun's o'er-dazzling light,
Who lingers to gaze on that rare kingly sight!

See! down from the hill-top a bright throng advances,
With no war-breathing trumpets, no pennons, no lances,
In Peace's white garments careering along,
With flower-crowned temples, with mirth, and with song!

" All hail to the Chieftains, invincible three!
To our Conquerors mighty we bend low the knee—
Round their fortune-flushed brows let us garlands intwine,
Let us drink to their glory in goblets divine."

Thus sang they in chorus as onward they bound,
While the accents of gladness float lightly around;
Then reaching the Chieftains they suddenly pause,
And the air becomes hoarse with a storm of applause.

Now nature leaps up, and its kindly tide flows
Through the veins of those Chiefs, on their manly cheeks glows;
It speaks through their eyes, it dilates in their forms,
And they clasp their late foes in the folds of their arms!

But scarce did the impulse of brotherly love
In the souls of those heroes awaken and move,

Their new friends are just held in their manly embraces,
When the traitors tear off the fair masks from their faces.

One moment they stood there, a gay, peaceful band,
In the next they are armed with dagger and brand,
And the scowl of foul treachery terribly lours
O'er the brows which but now were all radiant with flowers!

Ah! hushed all the songs, all the music, all mirth,
Untasted they dash down the wine on the earth—
A hundred they number of every degree,
And the dastards rush down to take vengeance on three.

Oh, that butchery! hide from our horror-struck sight,
Weave a veil, weave a veil, weave it dark as the night;

But when spasms are all past, and the last sigh hath fled,
Let us cast one fond look on the forms of the dead.

By the brave steeds that bore them they tranquilly lay—
Those steeds whose fleet limbs are as pulseless as they;
Their pure virtue typed at the moment they died,
In those snowy-white figures that sleep at their side.

Thus fell three noble Chiefs by a foreigner's guile,
While double-dyed treachery triumphed the while;
But their glory yet burns with a holier flame,
From this deed still more darkening a demon-dark name.

So in climes of the East, where the red flames devour
The fair aloe-trees where they gracefully tower,
Though their ashes lie scattered in heaps on the ground,
Still they shed a rich odour which floats all around.

THE TWO KINGS.

THE ice-king cast his magic gems
Athwart the lordly beeches' spray,
And diademed the willow stems,
And poplars grey.

Emerging bright from cloud of blue,
On beamy wing, Apollo dowers
The earth with light of dazzling hue,
In rainbow showers.

The lake in spell-bound peace remains,
Yet glistens with a pearly sheen,
Glancing in beauty through its chains,
Like captive queen.

While far along the frost-bound tide
Skim light the bands of youth and age,
There, steel-impelled, the courtier glides,
And there the sage.

Here cooing lovers late have been,
And childhood leads its flower-sweet train,
Glassed in the ice, like cherubs seen,
On cloister pane.

The fairy fret-work on the trees,
The mirth that rang from shore to shore,
Flash on the brain like memories
Of Eastern lore.

But, heavens! that awful crash which booms,
On Horror's lightning pinions borne,
Like to the rending of the tombs
On Judgment morn.

One vivid flash of diamond beam,
Then glides this dream-like scene beneath,

And o'er the surface of the stream
Broods darkly Death!

Tremendous ghoul, from whose cursed breath
Convulsive woe is wafted far,
Like that remorseless monster's teeth
Whose seed is war.

O Lethe! flood that harrowed soul
Who saw his blooming infant die,
Sink, like rose-bud in crystal bowl,
Before his eye!

O widow! bathed in burning flood,
With wailing orphans round thy knee,
May He who feeds the raven's brood
Thy solace be.

Unhappy maid, who raving weeps,
Thy love a mass of senseless clay,
Cease! for to joy his spirit sweeps
Up yon Sun-ray.

Martyrs to grief! 'tis sweet to know,
Though life is numbed by frost's chill wing,
For hearts that calmly bear their woe,
There is a King,

In clime where unthought splendors glow,
Will change your tears to gems more bright,
Than sparkle round the ice-chief's brow
On starriest night.

And smiling from his flaming throne,
Will set them lustrous, rich, and fair,
In many a peerless, shining crown,
For ye to wear.

THE PHOOKAS' REVEL.

As the midnight dirge
Of the wintry blast
Passed chill o'er the sad-browed hill,
And the Banshee's wail
Rose up on the gale,
Upborne from the sedge-lined rill;
From their caverns grey the Phookas came,
With their wings and nostrils all aflame,
And they swept down the mountain's side,
Like the glittering flood of some fire-born stream,
Which the fancy weaves in a feverish dream,
And beholds as it leaps with a ghoul-like gleam,
In the joy of its seething pride.

Through the rocky glen,
And the fog-wreathed fen,
Down the slopes of the drowsy vale,
Mid the woods so lone,
Where the pine-trees moan,
In the fierce embrace of the gale;
The monsters' hooves split the boulders grim,
Rent the sleeping oxen limb from limb,
While they furrowed the daisied mead,
As the Levin roots up the ash so fair,
Or the torrent bounding from rock-veiled lair,
Upheaves the green turf like a wild ploughshare,
Rolling on with a death-winged speed.

To the river's brim,
Where the mist, so dim
Of the ruthless cataract broods;
Where the otter's cry
Pierces up to the sky,
Shrill and sharp o'er the hoarse-tongued floods;
The steeds of enchantment dashed along,
Like the wild refrain of a hunter's song,

Till they snuffed the uprisen spray;
Then with giant spring they rose from the ground,
Streamed on to mid-river in arrowy bound,
And their wild neighs rang the tall cliffs around,
As they raced o'er the billowy way.

Then on to the steep,
Where the waters leap
Like a falling silver cloud;
In sinewy strain
They galloped amain,
With their archèd necks so proud.
The granite ledge may not stay their flight,
Nor the whirling rush of the waters white,
As in yeasty sweep they glide;
And now, in the glittering haze arrayed,
They shine in the garb of some spectral shade,
As the ghost-like gleam of the mist displayed
Their forms o'er the foam-wreathed tide.

To the watery grave,
Where the willows wave

O'er the bones of the shepherd drowned,
Each wingèd steed,
With his hooves of speed,
Flew down, with a thundering sound;
Round the dismal pool, in a circling dance,
With snorts of fire, with a plunge and a prance,
They course in a magic ring;
Till the water-rat peeps from his oozy hole,
And the wild fox halts in his midnight prowl,
While, with many a hoot, the winking owl
Sails, scared, on her ghostly wing.

And so, all the night,
Until dawning of light,
They dash o'er the turbid stream;
Then the lurid glow
Of the sparks that flow
From their eyes, in a fiery gleam,
Shows the waves beneath like a liquid hell,
While their neighs are the banded, deaf'ning yell
Of fiends round a cauldron dire;
As they dance and leap at its utmost verge,

Or, with merciless goads, their victims urge
Through the ever-growing, torturing surge
Of a fell, resistless fire.

Or at times they dash,
Like a lantern's flash,
Up the rushing torrent's banks;
And the snow-white specks
Of the hot foam-flecks,
Shine clear on their heaving flanks;
Through thickets they fly, and through hamlets lone,
Where in sleep resounds the peasant's deep groan,
As their thunder has reached his ear;
For he dreams that the headless horsemen, slain
In the bloody lists of old Aughrim's plain,
Have mounted their terrible steeds again,
And are filling the earth with fear.

But when matin breeze
Swells the liquid air,
And winds clear round the sad-browed hill;

When the Banshee's wail
Has ceased on the gale,
From the verge of the sedge-lined rill;
To their caverns lone, in the mountain's womb,
Where they hide from the day in kindred gloom,
Troop the Phookas swift along;
As horrors, fantastic, dark, undefined,
Will pass in review through the troubled mind;
Or as dies away, on the chill dawn wind,
The sound of a reveller's song.

THE FATAL FLAG.

O! the Spring was kissing each feathery spray,
To the loving buds was clinging,
And the Spirit of Joy, his star-sown way,
To the earth was lightly winging—
When a casement oped on a castle fair,
Where the glancing sunbeams quiver,
And a lady dowered with a beauty rare,
Looked down on a kingly river.

A galley lies floating upon the tide,
At its prow silk pennons streaming,
And a youth stands there in whose eye—not pride,
But the heaven of love is gleaming.

Gazed that youth above, with a look so bright,
To the blushing lady's tower,
That he shone like a diamond bathed in light,
At the foot of a crimson flower.

"O, Lady! I go to the lists of war,
Where glitter the deeds of story,
But thy whisper of love is more hallowed far
Than a conqueror's crown of glory.
When the Spring once again shall his odours shed,
My bark shall re-cross this water:
If a white flag waves, I am safe—if a red,
I have fallen in the ranks of slaughter!"

Then his hand to his fervid lips he pressed,
As he sailed from the Lady's tower,
Her smile was a rainbow of hope that blest,
While it gleamed through a tearful shower.
And away sped the youth o'er the earth's broad breast,
For those fields where the trump was blaring;
Where his flashing sword, and his snow-white crest,
Should shine in the front of daring.

O! the Spring from her bud-enwreathèd car,
On the earth was greenly peering,
When the youth's swift bark was seen from afar,
O'er the river's flood careering;
And the spoils that were wrenched from the foe-man's hold,
In the lists where lances shiver,
All over the deck lay bright unrolled,
As it crossed the kingly river.

The lady stands out on the castled crag,
And her gentle heart is burning,
To welcome the glittering, white-waved flag,
Which should tell of her lord's returning.
But joy steals the thought of that youth, like wine,
As he gazed on the maid from the billow,
And his erring hand raised a blood-red sign,
The false tale of his death-cold pillow.

Then a shriek from the shore rang loud and clear;
See—a banner of white in motion:

Ah! she views it not—as she sinks in fear
To that stream, like a star to ocean.
Plunges forth the youth—he has gained her side!—
One struggle—they sink together!
Now calmly glides on that sparkling tide,
Which shall flow o'er their graves for ever!

MAGIC TEARS.

A CLIFF springs up from the western wave,
Where the black seal haunts each sparkling cave,
And its peak is the spot for a hero's grave!
For there hang the tall plumes of deathless green,
Which are twined round the helm of the mail-clad queen;
While below, from dense ranks of milk-white sheen,
Comes the strain of the warlike Ocean!

A December's eve was cold and brown,
As a Celtic youth from this cliff's grey crown
On the seething flood gazed musing down.
A lyre he bore in his sinewy hand,
He wore the air of a poet grand;

And he looked from this crag of his mourning land,
O'er the dazzling crest of Ocean!

He spoke: "O! ye nymphs of the wood and the wold,
O! ye air-born spirits, undreamt, untold,
The sphynx-like fate of my land unfold!
Ye Mermen, dwelling in coral cells,
Ye Fays, aye haunting our dewy dells,
Say, say why dark sorrow for ever dwells,
By the waves of our God-like Ocean?

Then answered a voice in a tone sublime,
Clear as of bells in their evening chime,
With epic-like grandeur of elder time:
"Watch ye the vision the waves disclose!"
And, lo! from the deep two virgins rose,
Whose pearly lustre tremblingly glows,
O'er the awed and silent Ocean.

One form Minerva-like was dressed,
In a queenly garb, with a warrior's crest,

But her heart beat warm in its noble breast !
The other was starred with a splendor rare,
The breeze played soft through her dear black hair ;
Yet her brow was darkened by clouds of care,
As she gazed on the pitying Ocean.

Then the royal maid raised her snowy hand,
Which shone like the gleam of an ivory wand,
And her arm was wreathed in a dove-like band,
As she whispered—" O, Erin, forgive and forget "—
See their cheeks in a heavenly kiss have met,
And like gems on an azure mantle set,
So, framed were their tears in the Ocean !

As falling stars to the sea descending,
While these radiant virgins their way were wending,
Lo ! a Seraph-form came o'er them bending !
And her brow had a glow of a God-lit sphere,
As she caught in a vial one shining tear,
And winged her white flight to that headland clear,
Where the Bard stood entranced by the Ocean !

And this tear was transformed to a pearl more
bright
Than ever yet gladdened the diver's sight,
And the poet gazed through its beamy light,
And he saw his dear Erin of sorrowful story
Fling her mantle of gloom on the billows hoary,
And rise in the light of a strong-fledged glory,
O'er the wreaths of applauding Ocean!

The Bard woke up from his rapturous dream,
And the waters blushed in the morn's red beam,
As his prayer rang loud by the rock and stream,
That the Virgin's kiss, and the magic tear,
And that Heaven-born whisper, forgiveness dear,
Might yet flash on our eyes, and yet melt in our
ear,
By the shores of a joyful Ocean.

JULY.

MIDSUMMER now, like gorgeous eastern bird,
In gold and crimson plumage flashes on,
Mid roseate skies and odour-laden gales.
Then gently stooping in its lustrous flight,
Furls its bright wing on mead of Asphodels;
Where virgin blooms nod in the perfumed breeze,
Like to a snow-plume on a warrior's helm.
Swoons the glad air in unthought ecstasy,
While through its lucid chambers incense flows,
Swung from the urn of Nature's thurible.
Anear, a coppice lifts its verdant crown,
Where every glittering leaf like Elfin nurse
Cradles the noontide in its nestling folds.
Along the drowsy vale a cooling stream,

That bursts in silver from yon emerald hill,
With dulcet music charms the slumberous hour.
While down the liquid glory of the sky,
The swan-hued messengers of God descend,
To shed the glows of undreamt benisons;
And with the daily hymns of grateful men,
To scale the golden sunbeams back to Heaven.

IN MEMORY OF

THE LATE EARL OF MAYO,

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

SOLEMN and slow thy soldier funeral streams
Adown the mourning city's silent way;
On Strathnairn's breast the star of India gleams,
Before the bannered bier that bears thy clay.

And thus into the isle that gave thee birth,
Across the dark wave of thy native river;
Thou movest onwards towards that kindred earth,
Which soon shall close above thy grave for ever.

Yet ere this kingly *cortege* fades from sight,
A tribute wreath of sorrow I would weave;

Though slight, still pure, in token of the light,
The lustre of the memory which you leave.

Thy views and mine distinct, were far apart,
As distant headlands mid which billows roll;
Should this weigh down the promptings of the heart,
Or fright the calm decision of the soul?

Thine was a spirit of an essence rare,
Sternly obedient to conviction's call;
Yet ever dowered with a nameless air,
Which took by gentle storm the hearts of all.

With thee did duty ever strongly shine,
And, like the quivering of some mystic star,
The glowing symbol of a truth divine,
Fling out its broad, resistless light afar.

Firm, clear, and lucid, thy undaunted mind
In calm and bright serenity did move;
You served your Sovereign, and your common kind,
With tireless spirit, and with manly love.

If lofty purpose, and a stainless name,
  Are titles fair to blazon mortal page,
Thy deeds must grace the annals of pure fame,
  And gem the coming lustres of the age.

Thy spirit fearless as thy soul sincere,
  The splendor of thy courage was thy doom;
A danger scorning nature shaped thy bier,
  And veiled thy temples in a deathly gloom.

Then rest thee well; th' assassin's crimsoned knife
  Proclaimed thy mission on this earth was done;
All o'er—the toil, the chagrin, and the strife—
  Enjoy the haven that thy worth hath won.

THE MOTHER'S LAST KISS.

SHE stood on the peopled deck,
Her face was a lake of woe,
Her heart was a drifting wreck,
That never should gladness know.

How she kisses that tender girl,
With the eyes of Heaven's own blue,
With the long, soft locks that darkly curl
Down a neck of ivory hue!

Thou pulse of a mother's heart,
Ere yon sun shall gild the sea,
That mother shall for ever part,
Sweet, blue-eyed child, from thee!

Those sails that are spreading fast
Shall soon glide down the stream;
Then the hopes of thy youth be past,
And its joys but a fevered dream.

O! the grief of that parting wild,
As it echoed above the tide;
O! the shrieks of that darling child,
As it clung to its mother's side!

O! the kiss on that pallid cheek,
O! the tears that are starting now;
O! the inner woe that cannot speak,
Save in clouds on that mother's brow!

Decades have passed since that summer morn,
And decades still may roll,
Ere the freezing sight of that grief forlorn
Shall fade from the eyes of my soul.

TO THE RIVER MOY.

O! thou wildly-curving river
That rollest thy wave so fair,
By banks where the tall reeds quiver
In the hardy western air.
With a memory fresh and sparkling
I 've loved thee of all the streams;
For thy glows and shadows darkling
Were wov'n in my early dreams.

As I gaze on thee gently flowing,
Through the haze of decades gone,
And behold thy bright breast glowing
In the kiss of summer sun.

O! the charms of the past come flinging
Round my heart their amber loom,
Like a swarm of bright flies winging
Through a cavern's chilling gloom.

Then troop forth those roseate hours,
When joy roamed its airy dome,
Like a radiant queen of flowers
In courts of her bloom-bright home.
Or as an orient plumaged bird,
In the boughs of broad plane-tree,
All blithely sings till the grove is stirred
With his notes of rapturous glee.

O! river so calmly gliding,
I have looked on thy chafing flood,
When its angry waves dividing
Smote the shore with a giant thud;
When the crest of thy billows gleaming,
Shot up with a stainless glow,
Like the light of battle streaming
O'er the frown on a warrior's brow.

I have seen thee lustrous and fair,
Glowing crimson in eventide,
As youthful beauty soft and rare,
'Neath the veil of a blushing bride.
When the swallows skim the wavelet,
And trout at the grey moth spring,
While richly shine in the sunset
The hues of the wild drake's wing.

I have watched thee in tranquil moonrise,
As you mirrored the orbs above,
Glittering clear in the magic guise
Of a moving dream of love.
What time the owl from the belfry,
Floats over the abbey's wall;
And mystic bats in circles fly
Through the arch of its ruined hall.

And there from the mullioned window,
That o'erlooks the fair domain
Through whose well-loved dales thy currents flow,
In a mazy, radiant chain.

Where flutter the ghosts of the hours,
The joys of my glad spring day,
I 've seen thee glide under the bowers,
Then laughingly stream away.

I 've beheld thee in all thy phases,
As you leaped from the mountain's brain ;
The broadening, sparkling flood that races
Through the vale in a silver vein.
I 've gazed on thy gathering water,
As it rose an inland sea,
And smiled like a happy daughter
On thy fond, paternal knee.

Down the dizzy heights I 've tracked thee,
Of thy Titan torrents' leap ;
Glancing so ghostly, swift, and free,
And thundering adown the steep ;
Till in distance the mighty ocean
Rose up like an azure land,
And you hastened with lightning motion,
To clasp its enfolding hand.

Then serpent-like in the valley
In wand'rings I 've lost thy gleam;
Till again with a silver sally
Shone out thy resplendent stream.
Thus the sinner through guile's dark mazes,
Having missed his immortal guide,
All wistfully round him gazes,
Yet sees him not at his side.

Till pierced with an anguished feeling,
The hot drops of sorrow spring,
Then sweetly its light revealing,
Gleams the flash of an angel's wing;
And the angel points like that river
Down Time's bleak, sinuous strand,
To an Ocean laving for ever
The bays of a Godlit land.

TO CLONGOWES.

O! MEMORY-HAUNTED, storied pile,
That lifts thy turrets grey to morn,
Thy gleams can wake to life again
The vanished form of childhood's train;
And wreathe once more the golden smile
Of every hope that here was born.

The rosy joys of buried years,
The wingèd pearls of boyhood's hours;
The days as blithe as streamlets flow,
The sparkling truth of friendship's brow,
The echoing laugh, the short-lived tears,
That gemmed the cheek in rainbow showers.

The gorgeous aims and glows of mind,
The sweet illusions of the soul;
When every flower in Fancy's wreath
Was dowered with bloom that felt not death;
Like blossom's swaying in the wind,
Within the bounds of Eden's goal.

The witching dreams of bright romance,
When pinioned Youth the age disdains;
And darts upon its beamy flight,
Towards airy halls of magic light,
Where flash the helm, the plume, the lance,
Where "Queen of Beauty" proudly reigns.

And now behold each haunt beloved,
The bowery grove, the wimpling stream;
The darkling river's mightier tide,
The daisied glade, the meadows wide,
The trees, whose giant shadows moved
Like day-dreams in the summer beam.

Sweet, blissful scenes, shine forth again!
Where erst I drew that glorious air,
Which, rushing from your azure hills,
The heart with love of Erin thrills,
A love which fires each bounding vein,
And breeds a hope, a spirit rare.

Nor those unseen, whose wealth of brain
Illumed with sheen-like orbs at even,
Held o'er our senses lustrous sway,
Gave thought and feeling wider play,
And wove a bright and fragrant chain,
Which linked our hopes with Christ in Heaven.

O, saintly Clongowes! may thy name,
As cycles glide their paths adown,
Yet bright and brighter grace the scroll
Which paints the age while lustres roll;
And may thy sons grasp smiling fame,
Pure as those fields where stars are sown.

Long may thy sacred guardians shine,
And deftly wield like Titan powers;
Lighting to God the upward ways,
With torches lit at learning's blaze;
While, swan-like, moves in peace divine,
The gleam of angels round thy towers.

A GIRL OF CONNEMARA.

SHE stood on the crown of a boulder grey,
In the gusty close of an autumn day,
Like a spirit pausing upon its way.
She was tall and shapely—a mantle red
From her sloping shoulders round her spread;
While the raven wealth of her faultless head
Fell loose in the air of evening.

Above her the mountains their shadows fling,
Around her the whirr of the moorcock's wing,
Below in the wild ash the linnets sing.
While farther still in the distance dim
Spreads an ocean wide where the sea birds skim,

Where the sun sheds the light of his crimson rim,
As he sinks 'neath the friendly billow.

The eye of that maiden was brightly blue,
The face of that maiden was grand to view,
And the smile of that maiden was sweetly true.
But the dark-robed king of unpitying care
Had swept all peace from her forehead fair;
And her heart beat chill as the midnight air
That sweeps through the lonely valley.

For all that had loved her in youth had gone,
No kindred soul on her young gaze shone,
A desolate orphan, unclaimed, unknown.
O! where were the pleasures of life for her,
The witching delights which the pulses stir?
E'en the peaceful hours by the hearthstone were
But a dream to this sad young maiden.

She flashes her gaze on the trackless tide,
As though on its billows her spirit would glide
To the giant land of the prairie wide;

Where far in the plains of the azure West,
Her father, her mother, her brethren rest;
Then like a bird left alone in its nest,
She sang to the air her sorrow.

The light air bodied the doleful strain,
And the sea-gull screamed o'er the restless main,
Till the echoing cliffs answered back again.
But higher and higher arose that cry,
It pierced the deep blue of the vaulted sky;
And an angel came from the spheres on high,
With a balm for that lonely maiden.

The sweet balm that the angel brought was prayer—
The young maiden knelt on the granite bare,
While she poured forth to Heaven her bosom's care.
Then arose she again with a tearless cheek,
And a light on her brow like the golden streak,
Which shines on a lofty mountain's peak
At the break of an eastern morning.

MY DREAM.

My chamber gloomed on that wintry night,
And the rain beat down like tears,
As I sat by the dying fire's light,
And dreamt of the blissful years.

I dreamt of my childhood's halcyon time,
Of my boyhood's joyous gleam;
Their ringing mirth was like the soft chime
Of bells on a mornlit stream.

Of my manhood, with its new-fledged joys,
And its pulses so strong and brave,
When the heart rose high, like lifeboat buoys
As they mount the tyrant wave.

O! then I dreamt of my wedding morn,
In the blush of fragrant spring;
Of the crownèd bliss of deep love born
Of hope on its soaring wing.

Until Death in dark-plumed terror came,
With his fingers cold and grim,
And snatched her soul from its cherished frame,
In the mists of December dim.

My heart beat chill as I saw the guest
That for evermore should dwell,
In frozen depths of my anguished breast,
In my memory's inmost cell.

Of the days and years of untold woe,
Of the smiles of hope so vain;
With never a soul that my grief could know,
Or think of my iron pain.

And thus as I dreamt my bitter dream,
Of the gladness for ever fled,

I saw my love with an angel's beam,
A crown on her sainted head.

Then sounded her voice within my ear,
"O, bear thou this iron pain!
Wear thou thy woe with never a fear
That the smiles of hope are vain!

For the patient soul shall hereafter shine
In the sparkling courts on high,
Like new-born stars in a hand divine,
Ere they dower the happy sky.

The pain that consumes thee there below,
Transformed by celestial wand,
Shall gem with a peace-woven crown thy brow,
In bowers of a fadeless land."

I awoke in the drear and cheerless night,
The rain still beat down like tears;
But I know that a morn shall smile full bright,
At the close of the troubled years!

CALLIOPE.

O! THOU, who bright spell weaves
In Tempe's scented glade,
Where Daphne's mystic leaves
In laurel splendor shade,
Peneus! thy smooth, translucent wave,
That windest round the circling base
Of Ossa plumed, in glassy maze,
Where lilies tall their petals lave;
Or loves to wander free
In morn or evening's beam,
As by the flower-sprent lea,
Sweeps on Ilissus' stream.

Muse of the heroes' lyre!
Muse of the sword's bright deeds,
O! thou whose songs inspire,
When wounded freedom bleeds,
The soul to burst the canker chains,
That tyrants forge for nation's limbs,
And by the magic of thy hymns
Give peace and liberty to ravaged plains;
Come thou, by Heaven taught,
Teach me to deftly sing
The wonders thou hast wrought,
O! lend thy soaring wing!

'Tis thou entwines the bays
To wreathe the Tribune's brows;
What time the sacred blaze
Of patriot passion glows!
Who, when the ruthless, perjured tongue,
Would doom fair innocence to die,
Lays bare to scorn the poisoned lie,
Pointing the source where guilt hath sprung.

Or when the coward's lash
On feeble shoulders fall,
Thou snatchest swift as lightning flash
The victim from his thrall.

The harp Euterpe sweeps
Can charm the listening trees,
On tall Cithaeron's steeps,
Her gold locks on the breeze;
The pale-browed Clio fills the page
Which to the nations yet unborn
Shall point the deeds that earth adorn,
And gem the names of saint and sage.
But thou, Calliope!
Doth wield a mightier pen,
Whose magic guides the pulses play
In the strong hearts of men.

Upon the gory field
Of storied Thessaly,
Thy presence unrevealed
Raised Cæsar's banner high.

And when upon Morgarten's height
The daring Tell led mountaineer,
In Austrian bosom fleshed his spear,
Thou bathedst his brow in Victory's light.
Erewhile on western plains,
When struggling serfdom bled,
Thou brokest foul Slavery's chains,
And crushed its Hydra head.

While clad in hoary snows
Old Pindus's mountains rise,
Or bask in summer glows,
'Neath Thessaly's blue skies;
May thou, sweet Muse, thy empire hold
O'er willing hearts with sacred might,
With sceptre of immortal light,
And golden teachings bright unrolled.
Thus Freedom's star divine,
O'er life's broad stream shall quiver;
Thus Truth's fair orb shall shine
Above the earth for ever.

IN MEMORY OF A

FAVORITE HUNTER.

STEED of the ample rein,
Steed of the flying mane,
Steed of the noble strain,
Rest thee for ever!

Steed through air bounding wide,
Steed of the tempest's stride,
Steed strong as ocean tide,
Rest thee for ever!

Steed of the mettle high,
Steed of the eager eye,
Steed loving hunter's cry,
Rest thee for ever!

Steed of the courage bright,
Steed of the motion light,
Steed of the constant flight,
Rest thee for ever!

Steed of the thunder deep,
Steed of the lightning leap,
Steed of the torrent's sweep,
Rest thee for ever!

A DREAM ON THE MOSELLE.

My heart was young, and buoyant as thy tide,
Moselle! when, leaning o'er the vessel's prow,
I marked Coblentz's pinnacles of pride,
And Ehrenbreitstein's bold, defiant brow,
Glittering like snow-peak in the morning's glow;
And as above thy azure wave I stood,
And watched the winding current's mazy flow,
I caught the magic of thy sparkling flood,
And felt a thrilling rapture bounding through my blood.

Years, bright and sad, have flown, O, beauteous river!
Since glanced that witching landscape to my view;

My dearest link to earth was snapped for ever
Since last I gazed upon thy waters blue.
Yet in my memory shines each radiant hue
My eyes beheld while gazing on thy stream;
Still rise up in my soul those scenes that flew
Athwart my vision in a meteor gleam,
As, floating on thy breast, I wove a gorgeous dream.

For as the verdant glens and woodland green,
Which from thy vine-clad borders stretch away,
Disclosed in sombre hue, through leafy screen,
Full many an ivied tower or castle grey,
That seemed to shun the garish light of day;
I saw again the old, romantic time,
The days of lists, and jousts, and minstrel's rhyme,
The golden, stainless age of chivalry sublime.

And fast before my ravished vision streamed,
Mounted on barbèd steeds, a dazzling throng;
Their helms' bright plumes with lacing jewels gleamed,

Their corslets glittered as they dashed along,
While rang the notes of some wild, martial song,
And crimson pennons fluttered in the air ;
Sweet, smiling dames, those gorgeous ranks among,
Gave to the wooing wind their wealth of hair,
Which swept, with Orient-coloured gleam, their temples fair.

Then gaily-bannered lists are seen to shine,
And crescent seats for beauty, tier on tier ;
Throng the proud knights within the tourney's line,
Each with his lady's motto on his spear :
Waiting the signal, when, in swift career,
And crouching lowly on his flying steed,
His weapon's point shall stretch on mock death-bier
His plumèd foe, or he himself shall bleed,
And sink in glory's lap, a warrior's fitting meed.

Now liquid eyes are beaming nameless praise,
And silken scarves are waved in snowy hands,
With smiles of rapture all the scene 's ablaze,
As at the flash of genii's fabled wands.

The eager dames on highest tiptoe stand,
To greet the champion, who from steed descends,
Doffs his bright helm, as though at chief's command,
Surveys the tiers where love with beauty blends,
And to the radiant band in knightly homage bends.

Faded the dazzling day-dream to my sight,
And o'er the vivid landscape roamed my eye;
In spirit now it streams before me bright,
Verdure beneath, tall beetling crags on high;
And over all a beauteous mystery,
A golden haze of matchless loveliness,
On wave, on leaf, on mountain, and on sky,
Such as inspired Salvator scarce could guess—
Such as, thy glowing scenes, Moselle, alone possess.

River of beauty, and of winding sheen,
Scenes of delicious solitude, farewell!
If ne'er again I view thy slopes of green,
Thy pictured charms shall in my memory dwell,

And fill my heart with thoughts of thee, Moselle !
Adieu ! adieu ! each mead, each flowery glade,—
Each hill and vale, each plain, and bosky dell,—
Each towering forest, and each soothing shade,—
Each soaring peak, in mountain majesty arrayed.

AN EPILOGUE

FOR THE PLAY OF 'THE SERIOUS FAMILY,'

ACTED AT PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

BEFORE the curtain falls upon our ken,
Ere life resumes reality again,
A word, kind friends, who cheered us on to-night
With genial smiles, and countenances bright.
Our play is done; our strutting is all o'er;
We 'll tread the haunts of Comedy no more:
The characters have melted into wind,
And left their effigies alone behind.
"Life's fitful fever" past, they sleep so well,
They won't e'en waken at the prompter's bell.

Beneath this "lap of earth" a gent reposes,
Whose path of life seemed ever strewn with roses;

To whom the Gods vouchsafed each fond desire—
A Captain, and an Irishman—Maguire!
Here Charles Torrens rests — that sad pledge-
breaker—
One-half an exquisite, one-half a Quaker!
Hemmed on all sides, he rarely had his fling,
Unless, indeed, he got an "odd day's shooting."
And Mrs. Torrens, with her pensive face,
So full of sanctity, so full of grace;
Proteus herself had not so many hues,
Quaker or dancing, always in "the blues."
And Emma, and Frank Vincent, lovers twain,
They 've gone to spend the honeymoon in Spain;
Brought Danvers with them, to unpack the port-
manteau;
I hope he 'll not drink too much Oporto.
And Mrs. Ormsby Delmaine, widow gay,
Laughing out truth like Monsieur Rabelais;
If every widow was as well inclined,
They 'd do a great deal for perverse mankind.
And pious Sleek, Aminidab the holy,
Taking such pity for the souls so lowly

Of Passimaquaddy, or Trebizond,
Yet placing money in "the Sinking Fund."
Last, but not least, there's Lady Sowerby Creamley,
Saintly and cold—strong-minded woman she;
I'd say she was—though this is hardly civil—
A compound of red tapeism and the devil.

"Revenons à nos moutons"! I have strayed
Far from the proper subject, I 'm afraid.
To all the audience I now tender here
Our warmest thanks, our gratitude sincere:
Both for the patience and the impulse kind,
Which veiled our faults in a Cimmerian blind.
Cheered on by this we 've wooed the Comic Muse,
We've called on Thalia—say, did she refuse?
Our task has been to lift up truth on high,
And tear the mask from foul hypocrisy;
To prove that mirth and harmless joy can claim
A near affinity to Virtue's name;
That frowns and gloom suit not her radiant brow,
Mean vice alone should wear a face of woe.

If we have failed, you know Longinus writes,
"Failure is noble when righteousness incites."
Be this our balm, and not a poor one too,—
Now kind, and sympathizing friends, Adieu!

COMBAT BETWEEN TURNUS AND ENEAS.

ÆNID OF VIRGIL, BOOK XII.

RUSHED on Eneas from the further side,
In air high brandishing his shining spear.
"Why, then, delay? It little doth avail
That thou Protean forms would gladly wear;
Essay to reach the stars on cleaving wings,
Or hide thee in the winding caves of earth,
Since steel to steel the combat must be waged."
Then Turnus answered, while his helmet's plume
Shook grimly as he spoke; "I know no fear
For earthly man like thee; th' Olympian Jove,
My enemy, and all the Gods, I fear."

Nor further deigning speech, a rock he viewed,
Time-worn, but mighty, which, with massive front,
Marked out a boundary on the swelling plain,
Which scarce twelve men of modern size could wield.
This Turnus raising, while the hero stayed
His swift career, and high on tiptoe shone,
Against the foe the granite boulder hurled.
Who neither knew that Turnus rushed along,
Or raised the rock, or cast it at his breast.
Trembled his knees, and froze his icy blood.
Meanwhile, through space rolled on the ponderous stone,
Nor left his ken, nor still its force preserved.
And as in dreams, when languid sleep seals up
The hanging eyelid; fruitlessly we strive
To reach some golden shore; all hopeless fail,
Through strength benumbed, the sighed-for goal to win;
The tongue avails not wingèd words to frame,
And every sinew moving force denies;

Thus Turnus's sword, that thousand deeds would dare,
Was by a wrathful goddess tamely prisoned.
Then various thoughts his wondering soul revolves;
Where shine Rutulian tents he turns his eyes;
Trembles his hand upon his weapon's hilt,
Nor sees a path for flight; nor yet a way
To dash right headlong on the mocking foe.
No chariot here, or sister charioteer.
To him, thus wavering, glittered in the air
Enéas's spear, who watched the favouring time,
And drove it hissing from his laboring arm.
Never did wall by battering engine riven
Emit such din; nor ever in the roar
Of thunder sounded equal bray.
When gleamed the fatal weapon through the air,
Like to an ocean storm destruction flew.
The hungry spear transfixed the breastplate's edge,
And through the sevenfold shield descending swift,
In central groin the whizzing weapon stood.
Stunned by the blow, with stiffened, twisted limbs,
The mighty Turnus strewed the sounding plain.

Rose the Rutulians, startled by the groan,
The mountains rang, and rang the lofty woods
With echoes of that fearful voice of pain.
But Turnus, humbled, with his suppliant eyes,
And trembling hands stretched forth, entreating, spoke—
"This I deserve, nor shall I pray for life.
Enjoy thy fortune; but if parent's love
Can move thy heart—Anchises was thy sire—
Pity my father Daunus's age; restore
His son, alive—if so thou art inclined—
But dead, at least to rest him with his kin.
The victor's wreath is thine; th' Ausonian ranks
Behold me raise my conquered palms to thee.
Lavinia is thy bride, forbear to hate."

In shining arms the brave Eneas stood,
His eye-balls rolled, his right hand backward held.
Still more and more did Turnus's words prevail
To sway his soul, when, mark! the mighty belt,
The girdle sad the young Pallantis wore,
With all the well-known glittering studs embossed,

Shone on the shoulder of the vanquished foe.
Which Trojan youth, o'ercome by direful wound,
Turnus had slain, then wore the hostile spoil.
But when Eneas with his eyes drank in
This sad memorial of a cruel grief,
And trophies won in fight; by fury fired,
And anger vastly terrible, thus spoke,—
"Turnus! deem'st thou, with Trojan spoils adorned,
Escape is thine? With this devouring sword
Doth Pallas immolate thee; Pallas take
A rich reprisal from thy blood defiled."
Thus spake Eneas, as his keen-edged blade
Within the foe's opposing breast he sheathed.
In icy death the limbs of Turnus lay,
His life indignant sought the shades below.

TO LUCIUS SEXTUS.

ODE IV., BOOK I., HORACE.

In western gales, and spring's bewitching ray,
The dreary winter melts itself away.
Now from the gloomy docks the vessels glide,
And bound again upon the gladdened tide.
The ox forsakes the fold, the hind his hearth,
While hoary snows no longer whiten earth.
Now Venus, with the matchless nymphs conspire,
Beneath the moon to lead the tuneful choir.
Sulphureous flames from Vulcan's furnace flow,
And heat the Cyclops' forges with their glow.
Now should green myrtle youthful brows surround,
Or flowers upspringing from the nursing ground.

Now to the Faun within the forest shade,
In lambs or kids should sacrifice be made.
With equal hand pale Death unrolls his pall,
In lowly cottage or imperial hall.
O! happy Sextus, Time's too fleeting span
Forbids much hope within the breast of man.
Soon night shall press thee in the dark domain,
Where Pluto holds his ever gloomy reign.
Where generous wine thy veins shall never warm,
Or tender Lycidas display that form,
Whose witching grace doth all the youths inspire,
And fills thy bosom with an amorous fire.

TO DELLIUS.

ODE III., BOOK II., HORACE.

Do thou preserve a tranquil soul
When clouds of danger o'er thee roll;
When gladdened by prosperity,
O, mortal Dellius, humble be.
Act thus if sorrow shade thy brow,
Or if, on sward reclining low,
Thou mak'st the festive days divine,
With draughts of old Falernian wine;
Where mighty pine, and poplar white,
Their hospitable shades unite;
And murmuring waters love to rove
Beneath the winding banks above.

Thither bring wine, the short-lived rose,
And unguent that in odour flows;
While care, and age, and gloomy thread
Of sisters three are round thee spread.
Thy purchased woods, thy house and lands,
Shall quickly pass from out thy hands;
Thy villa, too, which Tiber laves
So freshly with his yellow waves:
And all this pomp and splendor fair,
Shall soon enrich another heir.
It matters not though poor or great,
We all must march through Pluto's gate;
One certain fate for all remain,
The urn of Death the lots contain;
Early or late, we mount the bark,
And exiles sail into the dark.

TO LICINIUS.

ODE X., BOOK II., HORACE.

THOU shalt enjoy a happier life
By wisely shunning ocean's strife,
Licinius; and while you dread
The tempest gathering o'er thy head,
The raving billows round that roar,
Still cautious shun the dangerous shore.
For whom the golden mean hath charms,
He need not rest in misery's arms;
Nôr doth he seek to find a home
Within some bright court's envied dome.
The pine more fiercely feels the squall,
The loftiest turrets heaviest fall;

The mountain tops the lightning seams,
Let troubled souls feel Hope's fresh beams.
At Fortune's feast, when seated high,
Fear thy approach, Adversity!
The same great Jove who winters bring,
Drives them before the advancing spring.
If now misfortune weighs thee down,
Thy brows shall soon wear Fortune's crown.
Euterpè wakes at music's flow,
Not always Phœbus bends his bow;
And when before thee bright unrolled,
Purple is spread, and tempting gold,
Wisely furl up thy swelling sail
Before the over-favouring gale.

TO A TREE.

ODE XIII., BOOK II., HORACE.

An ill-starred, luckless day, O tree!
He chose, whoever planted thee:
And reared thee with a hand profane,
Of grandsons and their grounds the bane.
That such a man in sire's life-stream
Would bathe his hand, I well can deem;
Or sprinkle all his chambers o'er,
In night's still hour, with guests' warm gore.
The Colchian poisons he hath known,
And every vice on earth that's sown;
He who, O, wretched tree! hath made
Thy branches spread in this soft glade;

About to fall upon my head,
And leave thy harmless master dead.
There come not clearly to our ken
The many dangers laid for men;
The Carthaginian sailors fear
The Euxine rocks, and sideway steer;
The soldier dreads the Parthian's stride,
The speedy arrows at his side;
The Parthian trembles as he thinks
Of Roman jails and clanking links;
Yet Death, with unexpected doom,
Shall aye lead mortals to the tomb.
How nearly did our eyes behold
The realms of Proserpine unrolled!
Of pious souls th' Elysian plains,
And Sappho, who, in witching strains,
Sweeping her harp with tapering hand,
Condemns the maidens of her land;
And thou, Alcæus, Ocean's woes,
The exile's grief, and battle's throes,
Sounding aloud with golden ease,
In deep, proud notes, the ear that please.

The disembodied shades admire
Each wondrous hand that wakes the lyre;
But for the gathering crowd, more charms
Hath tyrant's fall, or deeds of arms.
Who wonders? Cerberus, who hears,
In stupor hangs his heavy ears;
And serpents wreathed in furies' hair
Are charmèd with pleasure in their lair.
Their toils forgot in strains that fire,
Prometheus smiles, and Pelop's sire:
Orion stays the lion chase,
Nor hunts the lynxes timid race.

TO MELPOMENE.

ODE III., BOOK IV., HORACE.

He who is blessed on natal day
By thy sweet smile, Melpomene!
In Isthmian games shall not succeed;
Nor shall a bounding, fiery steed,
In chariot bear him, victor proud,
High o'er the hippodrome's dense crowd.
For him no warrior's wreath shall shine,
Entwined with Delian leaves divine;
Nor shall he grace the Capitol,
A chief who holds vain kings in thrall.
But where the Tibur's waters stray,
And beetling woods cast shadows grey,

The Lyric Queen shall in his ear
Whisper bright thoughts to poets dear.
Thy offspring Rome! O, Earth's fair Queen,
Hung on my brow a wreath of sheen;
And in the list of bards that grace
Her history's page, have given me place.
Now, safe from Envy's cruel sting,
I soar on safe and happy wing.
O, thou who taught sweet sounds to swell,
In chambers of the golden shell!—
Who to the silent, finny throng
Can give the swan's expiring song,—
If, as I pass, the people raise
Th' approving hand, pronounce my praise,
And hail me Master of the Lyre,
'Tis thou who dost my lays inspire!
If charm belongs to verse of mine,
The meed, the glory, all be thine.

BOOK OF EPODES. HORACE.

EPODE II.

HAPPY the man, like those of eld,
Who neither towns nor cares beheld;
Who, free of debt's corroding band,
With oxen ploughs his father's land.
No cruel tempest shocks his ear,
For him the ocean hath no fear:
He shuns the Forum, learns to hate
The gilded halls of pompous state;
To poplars tall he weds with care
The adult shoots his vineyards bear;
Cuts withered boughs, and grafts with knife
The youthful buds of healthy life.

Or in some vale's sequestered shade,
Surveys his oxen through the glade.
In cleanly jars hoards honey sweet,
Or shears the wool from flocks that bleat.
When Autumn, decked with apples red,
In orchards rears his comely head,
With joy he plucks the grafted pear,
Or grape of purple nectar rare;
Which fruit Priapus fondly shields,
And you, Silvanus, god of fields.

Now 'neath an oak's thick branches laid,
Now pillowed on the grassy blade,
While some bright brook in silver moves;
Sweet birds are singing in the groves,
And crystal founts in music rise,
Which seal with sleep the charmèd eyes.
But when the snows of thundering Jove,
And rains descend from heaven above,
With hounds the lusty boar he foils,
And hunts the monster to his toils;
Or spreads his nets with meshes small,

The greedy thrushes to enthrall ;
Takes with a noose the stranger crane,
And timid hare, his wished-for gain.

What grief, that robs the heart of ease,
Would not be lost mid scenes like these ?
If modest matron leads a life
Like Sabine, or Appulian wife,
In household tasks she takes her share,
And views with pride her children fair ;
Or bids the blazing faggots burn
To cheer her wearied lord's return ;
Pens up the cattle safe from cold,
And drains their udders in the fold ;
Pours out from vat the fresh-pressed wine,
And makes the simple board to shine.
Not Lucrine shell-fish, not the scar,
Not turbot, e'en if storms afar
Should drive them here from eastern seas ;
Not Afric birds my palate please ;
Not woodcock from Ionian isle,
Like olives rich on boughs that smile ;

Like sorrel sharp, in meadows grown,
Or mallows, herb in sickness known;
Or lambkin, slain at sumptuous feast
Of God, or kid from wolf released.

At such repasts in homeward line,
The farmer views his well-fed kine;
Or sees along the dark'ning lea
His wearied steers from ploughshare free;
And well-fed slaves, of wealth the proof,
Gathered beneath the massive roof.
Thus Alphaeus, musing pensively,
A country farm resolved to buy;
Calls in his money at the Ides,
At Kalends see it backward glides.

TO THE ROSE.

FROM ANACREON.

THE tender rose I love to sing,
Companion dear of crownèd spring;
Scent-laden breath of Gods above,
In hearts of men inspiring love;
Adorning, in Elysian hours,
The wingèd loves enrobed with flowers.
Of Venus fair enchanting toy;
The heaven-descended Muses' joy.
Sweet 'tis to pluck from prickly thorn
The buds that all the hedge adorn,
And with a careful finger brush
The dew that flies before the touch.

The reveller, as he quaffs his wine,
Plaits for his brow a wreath divine,
And twines therein thy petals red,
To bloom upon his shining head.
When vanish stars at light's first streak,
Aurora paints thee on her cheek;
Thy odour crowns the Graces' charms,
The bright nymphs wear thee on their arms;
The sages' pens thy birth disclose,
Mark now the history of the rose.

When o'er the Ocean's ravished tide,
Like some resplendent, matchless bride,
Venus, attired in heavenly ray,
Arose above the parted spray:
When from the brain of Jupiter
The Goddess of the mighty spear
Came forth, all terrible in arms,
And filled Olympus with alarms;
Then on the earth appeared to view
A tender bud of crimson hue,
And spreading petals to he sun,

The rose on earth her race begun.
From whose rich leaves the Gods, well skilled,
The golden nectar-drops distilled,
Whose hue for evermore should shine
In goblets of celestial wine.

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(*From THE SATURDAY REVIEW.*)

Generally speaking, in criticising a novel we confine our observations to the merits of the author. In this case we must make an exception, and say something as to the publisher. The *Mistress of Langdale Hall* does not come before us in the stereotyped three-volume shape, with rambling type, ample margins, and nominally a guinea and a half to pay. On the contrary, this new aspirant to public admiration appears in the modest guise of a single graceful volume, and we confess that we are disposed to give a kindly welcome to the author, because we may flatter ourselves that she is in some measure a *protégée* of our own. A few weeks ago an article appeared in our columns censuring the prevailing fashion of publishing novels at nominal and fancy prices. Necessarily, we dealt a good deal in commonplaces, the absurdity of the fashion being so obvious. We explained, what is well known to every one interested in the matter, that the regulation price is purely illusory. The publisher in reality has to drive his own bargain with the libraries, who naturally beat him down. The author suffers, the trade suffers, and the libraries do not gain. Arguing that a palpable absurdity must *be exploded some* day unless all the world is qualified for Bedlam, we

felt ourselves on tolerably safe ground when we ventured to predict an approaching revolution. Judging from the preface to this book, we may conjecture that it was partly on our hint that Mr. Tinsley has published. As all prophets must welcome events that tend to the speedy accomplishment of their predictions, we confess ourselves gratified by the promptitude with which Mr. Tinsley has acted, and we heartily wish his venture success. He recognises that a reformation so radical must be a work of time, and at first may possibly seem to defeat its object. For it is plain that the public must first be converted to a proper regard for its own interests; and, by changing the borrowing for the buying system, must come in to bear the publisher out. He must look, moreover, to the support and imitation of his brethren of the trade. We doubt not he has made the venture after all due deliberation, and that we may rely on his determination seconding his enterprise. All prospectuses of new undertakings tend naturally to exaggeration, but success will be well worth the waiting for, should it be only the shadow of that on which Mr. Tinsley reckons. He gives some surprising figures; he states some startling facts; and, as a practical man, he draws some practical conclusions. He quotes a statement of Mr. Charles Reade's, to the effect that three publishers in the United States had disposed of no less than 370,000 copies of Mr. Reade's latest novel. He estimates that the profits on that sale—the book being published at a dollar—must amount to £25,000. Mr. Reade, of course, has a name, and we can conceive that his faults and blemishes may positively recommend themselves to American taste. But Mr. Tinsley remarks that if a publisher could sell 70,000 copies in any case, there would still be £5,000 of clear gain; and, even if the new system had a much more moderate success than that, all parties would still profit amazingly. For Mr. Tinsley calculates the profits of a sale of 2,000 copies of a three volume edition at £1,000, and we should fancy the experience of most authors would lead them to believe he overstates it. It will be seen that at all events the new speculation promises brilliantly, and reason and common sense conspire to tell us that the reward must come to him who has patience to wait. *Palmam qui meruit ferat*, and may he have his share of the profits too. Meanwhile, here we have the first volume of Mr. Tinsley's new series in most legible type, in portable form, and with a sufficiently attractive exterior. The price is four shillings, and, the customary trade deduction being made to circulating libraries, it leaves them without excuse should they deny it to the order of their customers.

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